Jimmy Carter: the Democratic Eisenhower

Keith Jarrett: the Nureyev of Jazz

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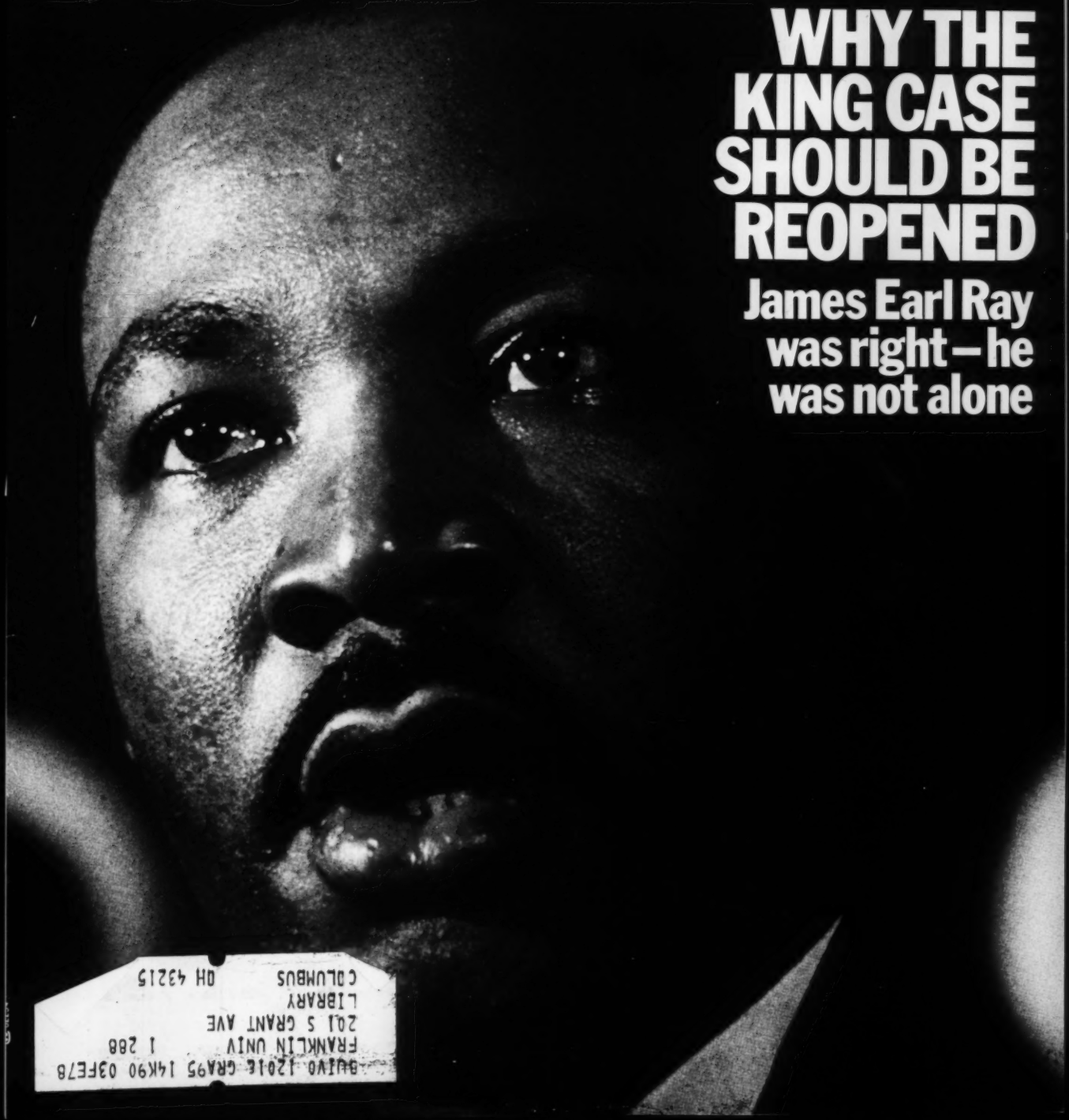
THE FEATURE NEWS MAGAZINE

New Times®

WHY THE KING CASE SHOULD BE REOPENED

James Earl Ray was right—he was not alone



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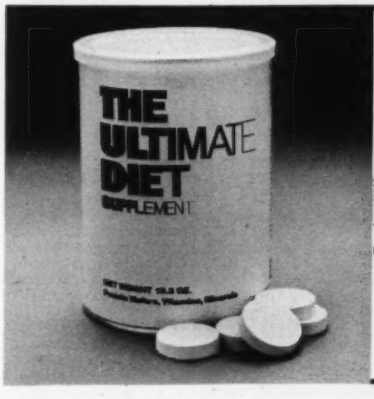

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APRIL 1, 1977
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 7

NewTimes

A man he calls Raoul

Nine years ago this month, Martin Luther King was gunned down. James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin, to this day maintains his innocence, claiming "Raoul" directed his actions. But who is Raoul? Two investigative reporters take a startling new look at the evidence that not only may reveal the identity of this shadowy figure, but also point the way to a new investigation.

By Jeff Cohen and David S. Lifton

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Unsung clones

What do Lillian Hellman and Richard Boone have in common?

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COVER
PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLES MOORE/ LIFE MAGAZINE © TIME, INC.

Grapes of wrath: 1977

Land reform, a concept often pressed on landholders and leaders of countries such as South Vietnam and South Korea, is now being tested in the U.S. A band of California dirt farmers are demanding land they should have gotten 75 years ago, but large agribusiness corporations are standing their ground. Nguyen Van Thieu, it's your turn to laugh

By Judith Strasser

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Mr. Epiphany

Before a concert, he concentrates on nothing—his mind's a blank. At the keyboard, his music is made on the spot. Keith Jarrett, moving now from jazz to free-form classical composition, is doing what no other player in the world does.

By Frank Conroy

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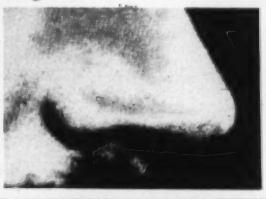

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Schaffner reels in a good one with *Islands in the Stream,* but George Roy Hill misses the goal in *Slap Shot.*
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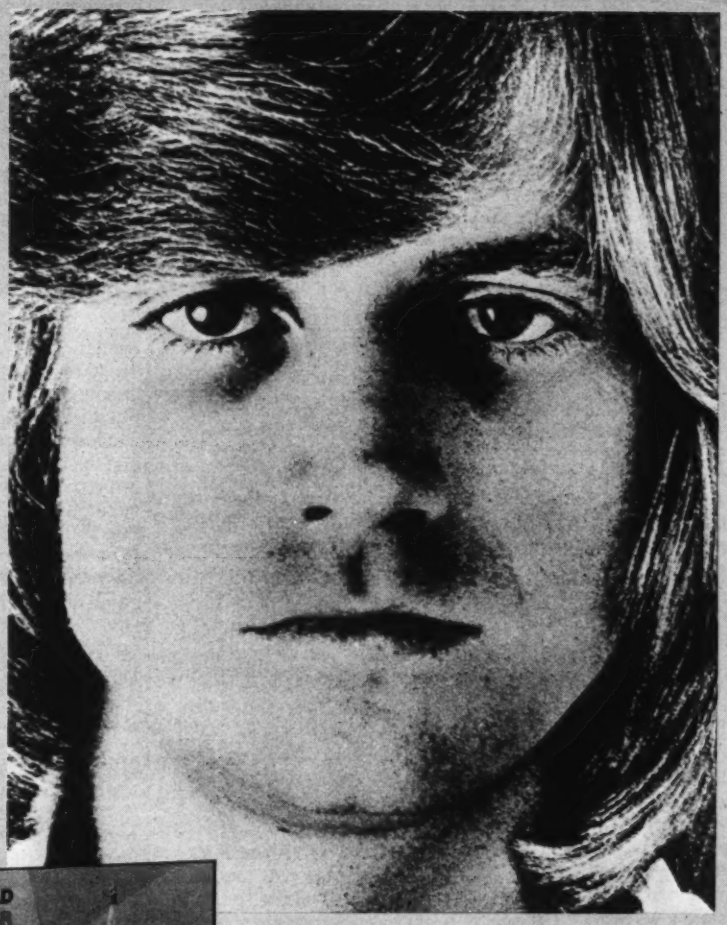
JUSTIN HAYWARD



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Letters

After the fall

As one of the co-founders of *New York* magazine, I was fascinated by the story "Felker's Fall," by Lucian K. Truscott IV, in the March 4 issue. I've had no part in day-to-day management, but Mr. Truscott's story is confirmed by the directors I've spoken to, as well as top-level people in the *Washington Post* and other places.

One or two notes, though, for the record. The casual reader of this story—and elsewhere in the press—might think the NYM company had been in financial trouble, because the stock was at $2 a share. In an extremely thinly traded stock, a few hundred shares might depress the market by 50 percent, and if there were no buyers it would just sit there, asleep, not trading. So that price is irrelevant. Further, it isn't unusual for thinly held stocks—and publishing stocks—to sell at less than they are worth if a buyer wants them.

It's interesting to note, for example, that Mr. Murdoch's own company, News Limited, sells at about $1.60 a share on the Sydney Stock Exchange. I bought a few token shares and analyzed the annual report. News Limited is selling for about half its stated assets. Note 14 in the report reveals that Mr. Murdoch's British investments, "News International," are selling in the public market for less than he paid. But this doesn't seem to have detracted from his reputation as a press lord; other factors are involved.

The directors of the New York Magazine company who were so eager to sell had already, for the most part, taken their investment out. Either they came in with the early financing, where the partnership form enabled them to write off up to 77 percent against income taxes, or, as in the case of Mr. Bull and Mr. Burden, they recovered their investment by the sale of the *Voice*.

The New York Magazine company had just spent $4 million to launch *New West*, but as yet had scarcely begun to recoup its investment. That would certainly seem to be exactly the wrong time to sell a company. If you had a minicomputer company and had just spent $4 million on design and engineering, and your salesmen brought in $40 million of orders, you might start to sell the product before selling the company. Of course, any board has a management problem when a line item of its budget goes $1 million over.

A friend of mine who is an astute investor in publishing, Warren Buffett, said, "if they wanted to sell it, why didn't they have an auction?" Publishing properties, once they are created, can sell at a premium because they have a franchise, and are so difficult to duplicate. If you want to sell them, there is a way to do that skilfully. Like houses, properties bring the best price when a buyer wants them, not when the seller has to sell. There was no *rational* reason to sell the New York Magazine company. At least no rational, financial reason. The reasons were individual and personal, as Mr. Truscott described in his story.

"Adam Smith"
George J.W. Goodman
Princeton, New Jersey

"Felker's Fall" might be of interest to people in the publishing business or in some financial circles, but I can't imagine who else. The only thing I gleaned from it was that Amy would be in trouble if she took him in on her lemonade stand.

W.T. Crockett
Mesquite, Texas

Down on Brown

Robert Shrum's column on Jerry Brown ("Party Lines," March 4) should have been on the "Final Tribute" page. Brown's career has been on the skids ever since Robert Scheer's article ("Demystifying Jerry Brown," May 28, 1976) exposed him as a shrewd, ambitious man of the Carter (or Nixon) stripe. While all that mysticism stuff seemed to die a quick and merciful death, and even though Brown is now trying to run California as a governor should, it seems as if he hasn't a friend in the world. All that talk about "1980" or "1984" is just so much hot air. The grim truth is that Jerry Brown has had it.

Susan Nunes
Medford, Oregon

A Sharp point

I appreciate Robert Shrum's enlightenment in the matter of the political and philosophical issues engulfing Jerry Brown's troubled California. I was disappointed, however, at the unfortunate error of referring to Rose Bird as the first female chief justice of an "important court." Unless you are assuming the North Carolina Supreme Court unimportant, please note that our very distinguished Susie Sharp has been at the top of the bench since January 1975.

David Bell
Raleigh, North Carolina

Strangers in the night

In reference to your article "The shattering of Wayne Hays" (October 15, 1976), I just want to call your attention to your statement that Dan Rosen, "Captain Dan," called me after a failure at a bar and came by my place and left before day light because he didn't want to wake up to me. The statement is not true. I have never ever been out with Captain Dan or he has never been to my place or I have never been to his or around him. I lived in the same apartment building he did at one time. I don't or never had any physical contact with Dan Rosen.

Elizabeth Ray
Arlington, Virginia

High notes

Your February 18 issue was really special. All the articles on music were interesting and informative, but the "Looking backward" piece held a special treat for me—the review of Wardell Gray's *Central Avenue* album. As Wardell's widow, I want to thank Jim Miller for his kind (and true) words.

Dorothy Gray
Los Angeles, California

Many thanks to Arthur Lubow for a fascinating exposé of the elusive Dan. Frankly, I was tickled to see the show biz kids agree to such a venture (February 18). Steely Dan's intended malapropisms are cleverly meshed with an intricate jazz/rock musical style, offering a rare and fresh breed of rock and roll.

Miles Perhour
Ottawa, Canada

The people at *New Times* would like to hear from you. Please write to Letters, New Times, One Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Letters are edited for space and clarity.

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Behind The Scenes

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR SHAY

Author and subject: Lifton and Jerry Ray at their meeting in Chicago

In April 1968, when Martin Luther King was gunned down, free-lance writer Jeff Cohen was playing basketball in high school. David Lifton, an engineer-turned-*Ramparts*-writer, was beginning work on his book on the Kennedy assassination. Neither thought, on hearing the news, that nine years later he would be trying to untangle the murder.

Lifton, who had worked on the film *Executive Action*, first got interested in the theory presented on page 21 while working on background research for a film on King. "I'd put different clips and information into name files. One was 'Raoul,' another was a file on all the references to Ray's brother, Jerry. One day, it just hit me. A Eureka experience. The correlation was just so impressive." About the same time, Cohen was covering Ray's evidentiary hearing in Memphis, where, as it happened, he bumped into Jerry Ray: "I asked him about what he thought of the way William Bradford Huie had handled the book on his brother's case, changing the title from 'They Slew the Dreamer' to 'He Slew the Dreamer.' Jerry replied, 'The only dreamer was Huie.' I had no idea then that he'd be so important to the case."

When the two handed in their story to *New Times*, Robert Sam Anson, who was helping edit the piece, suggested that Lifton try to interview Jerry Ray. Lifton wasn't particularly happy, but he arranged the meeting in Chicago: "I had heard so much about Jerry being a raw racist, I was pretty nervous." To his surprise, Jerry in person was not nearly as sinister as the man David had imagined from the clips. In fact, he was genuinely funny, and had Lifton in hysterics with his anecdotes about some of the assassination critics he knew. But there were still the facts. "Like a doctor, you just have to follow what's on the X-ray, which, in this case, means the evidence." Lifton still thinks that both brothers were framed. "I find it hard to believe Jerry could be the mastermind behind anything." Both he and Jeff think that the case can be solved, but there is a long way to go—a fact underlined by the words of a senior official at the Justice Department. After hearing some of the evidence on Raoul, he said, "I suppose it should have been obvious. This is the first that it occurred to me. My concern was always with outside forces. What you're saying is that there may have been [outside forces], but it may have been through a very convenient cover which is Jerry. I hope that was investigated, but if it wasn't it should be."

Well, it wasn't. But it very well may be. Lifton was asked to appear before members of the House Investigation Committee to present the information.

If the evidence does lead the committee to new information, it will not surprise Stanley Pottinger, assistant attorney general in charge of civil rights: "I think that, whether it's Watergate or these assassinations, good investigative reporting may well be the only way that the truth is known."

George A. Hirsch

Party Lines

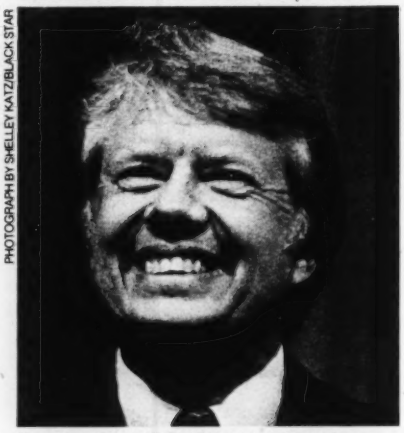
A Democratic Eisenhower/By Robert Shrum

Last year, one Democratic senator called Jimmy Carter "our Nixon." Last fall one *Times* man foresaw in him "another Roosevelt." But after two months of his presidency, he looks more like a Democratic Eisenhower.

Repealing the New Deal was a 20-year dream of Republican reactionaries; Eisenhower only shaded it to the right. Instead of opposing Social Security, he soon proposed a marginally lower increase of benefits than those proposed by congressional Democrats. By 1960, when Eisenhower favored a modest rise in the minimum wage—ten cents less than the Democrats—Barry Goldwater was denouncing the Republican Administration as "the dime store New Deal." Eisenhower was a nonideological president, standing at the center of gravity amid competing groups and the push and pull of public opinion.

At a closed door meeting of the AFL-CIO executive council in early March, Richard Scammon, an electoral demographer who wrote the (Henry) Jacksonian *Real Majority* in 1970, characterized Carter as similarly nonideological, "a product of the pressures on him." Scammon's primary evidence was the new President's economic program with "something in it for everyone," including tax cuts for business and some public works jobs, but just a fraction of the number labor and liberals have counted on. Like Eisenhower before him, Carter is shading rather than reversing his immediate predecessor's policies—in this case, a little to the left. No one is likely to refer to him as a dime store or even a Tiffany version of Ford, but Carter's domestic issues adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, gave away the marginal nature of the differences to date, when he described the new budget as "less chary and retrogressive than Ford's." Less retrogression was the least hope of many Democrats, but about the most they have gotten so far. Carter restored $10 billion of Ford's cuts in Labor, HEW and HUD, but he turned down virtually every request from his own cabinet for new social spending.

Carter the President thus follows Carter the campaigner, who was for compassion and against welfare cheaters, against amnesty and for it under another name, for national health insurance, but not for a while. He could have it both ways; the voters could have it either way they wanted it to be. In response to 40 percent unemployment among the young, the president just announced a $1.8 billion program, which pleased his black constituency and bread-and-butter Democrats. But the budget balancers were placated by the fact that hardly anything in the program was new: all of it had been included in the economic plan a month before, and a majority of the additional jobs were already authorized under existing legislation. The administration's position on the Arab boycott flashes another double image. Once in power, a State Department official says, "I realized that this issue is the most complicated



PHOTOGRAPH BY SHELLEY KATZ/BLACK STAR

I've ever seen." So the administration recommended regulations that hardly curb the boycott.

Even on the issue where he has seemed boldest, Carter has been a calibrated moderate. The Democratic left and columnists like Anthony Lewis of the *Times* cheer aid cutoffs to Argentina, Ethiopia and Bolivia for violating human rights. But conservatives can rationalize that the Bolivian assistance was scheduled to stop anyway this September, that Ethiopia is chaotically radical and that Argentina regards retribution as a minor matter. And in the place where aid critically does matter, South Korea, Secretary of State Vance foreswore a cut-off because "we must balance a political concern for human rights against . . . security goals." Apparently Carter will half-keep his pledge to the remnants of the Democratic peace movement to withdraw American forces from Korea—but only ground troops, and not before 1982. Hardline anti-Communists can find consolation in the delay and the pledge of continuing air cover. And they also have the satisfaction of the President's vigorous defense of Russian dissidents. Yet the balance remains even. One administration official insists, "We're edging toward the boundary of Soviet tolerance, but no farther. We don't intend to jeopardize détente." He adds that at best the pressure may loosen the screws of Soviet repression a notch or two. Here the parallel with Eisenhower is almost literal: Ike paid lip service to liberation in Eastern Europe before the Hungarian revolt, but safely had only those words for the freedom fighters after it broke out.

Carter's domestic populism is proving as moderate as his foreign policy. He has moved against corporate capture of the regulatory system, for example, by selecting Mike Pertschuk, a consumerist from the Senate Commerce Committee, to chair the Federal Trade Commission. Ralph Nader exulted at the choice; that softball game in Plains last August finally scored a tangible bonus. But among his associates, Nader continues to doubt Carter's views on the fundamental questions of tax reform and energy.

From Roosevelt to Robert Kennedy to McGovern, tax reform has been a special Democratic dream, but apparently the Carter reality will come in the form of one more circumspect compromise. House Ways and Means Chairman Al Ullman has suggested—and an administration aide confirms—that the President's proposal, now in the drafting stage, will balance loophole closing with stockholder deductions for corporate income taxes (in plain language, a rebate of the corporate levy), a reduction of the highest individual tax rate from 70 to 50 percent and further write-offs for business investment. Treasury Secretary Blumenthal is laying the rationale for the write-offs by worrying the prospects of a capital crunch—a perennial specter that never seems to materialize. The drafting of the tax plan itself is in the hands of Treasury Undersecretary Laurence Woodworth, a former aide to Senator Russell Long, the congressional godfather of tax preferences. Last spring, when the Senate Democratic Caucus welcomed Jimmy Carter, following his primary victories, Edward

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Kennedy asked Long, his bitter antagonist in debating tax loopholes, why he was applauding so enthusiastically; after all, Kennedy teased, Carter was for tax reform. "So am I," smiled Long. "The right kind of reform." Apparently his confidence is being vindicated. An economic adviser to past Democratic presidents now says: "The White House will label the plan 'tax reform' and there will be some, maybe enough to satisfy the Democrats who want to believe, but no real redistribution of income. That's what tax reform was supposed to do."

On energy, the new administration is readying another moderate mix. Carter energy chief James Schlesinger has been conferring regularly with liberal House Interior Chairman Mo Udall. Udall has found Schlesinger tolerant of notions such as tax penalties on oversized cars and perhaps even a federal corporation to develop portions of the oil reserves on public lands. But a Houston oil executive understands that, despite a few such heresies, the energy bill "will be something we can live with." He hears from Schlesinger's staff that there probably will be price decontrol and further subsidies for private investment.

Carter owes his election to a disparate collection of interests across the political spectrum. Now, balanced policies may conciliate separate groups, as balanced promises persuaded them in the campaign. But then and now, Carter's popularity goes beyond issue-moderating to image-making, which appeals to virtually all Americans. With Eisenhower, the phenomenon was a derivative of his history: after D-Day, they all liked Ike. Carter draws upon a humbler background of peanut farming and a sustaining succession of inaugural populisms, town meetings and phone-ins to the Oval Office. Such devices transcend ideology and content. Carter has brought McLuhan to the White House: the medium is the message. So far, campaigning has been his central method of governing.

Carter's policy and personality have confounded the Republicans, who, as the opposition, naturally look for things to oppose. House Minority Leader John Rhodes, says a friend, "can't see much to be against. He can't attack Carter for being too moderate; that would just get him more Republican support. He can't make the case that Carter's too liberal, not yet anyway. And he can't attack the image—this really looks like an open presidency, the opposite of Nixon." Rhodes recently mourned that his party has "no story to tell." Press criticism has been muted, too; reporters have herded to insider quibbles, such as the failure to tend to congressional feelings. Part of the reason, a White House correspondent thinks, is that the press generally covers obvious conflicts "and there aren't any." And where there could be trouble, another reporter argues, "Carter has gotten off easy. He announced that he won't discuss specifics about the CIA, but will tell us whenever he discovers a misdeed. We didn't push him on the contradiction."

Reporters, he explains, reflect the national mood. As his own polls have told Carter all along, and as he said all last year, Americans want to be hopeful again. They want to be healed, not divided over great issues. So it was in Eisenhower's day. Walter Lippman endorsed him in 1952 as a necessary agent of calm and consolidation after the New Deal, World War II and the Truman scandals. Carter comes after the Great Society, Vietnam and Watergate, an even harder time: LBJ was not FDR; the last war was our first defeat; and Nixon compounded the worst felonies of Truman's

WIDE WORLD

subordinates. Carter matches the moment; indeed, as Democratic activist Alan Baron points out, "He wouldn't have come near the nomination in 1972. The party wanted someone who was very right on the war issue. Carter would have been lost somewhere in the Muskie middle. But he was perfect for 1976. Jackson could take him and so could McGovern. He could bridge the gaps in the party and the country."

Carter will not court controversy if he can avoid it. He will move where he has to, as Eisenhower did when Orval Faubus' resistance finally drove him, after weeks of hesitation, to enforce school desegregation in Little Rock. By then, action had become less hazardous politically than passivity. Similarly, Carter seeks a Panama Canal settlement by June: the alternative to a treaty soon may be fighting in the Canal Zone, and ratification will be easier before the congressional election year. Normal relations with Cuba and Vietnam, certain to anger some conservatives, but a dangerous thing to deny Democratic liberals, must proceed quickly to leave a cooling-off period prior to the 1980 presidential contest. In the same spirit, because labor and business adamantly detest wage and price restraints, Carter will forgo them, a congressional leader reports, unless and until inflation is headed into double digits.

Last year, Mississippi Democratic National Committeewoman Pat Derian, a reform activist, assured her friends that Carter was a closet liberal; Charlie Kirbo reassured the business community that he was soundly conservative. Pollster Pat Caddell seconded campaign manager Hamilton Jordan's notion that the candidate would never hand the government back to the best and the brightest. But Vance, Brzezinski and the others are there; the new administration could not muster the qualified outsiders, transition official Barbara Blum pleaded. Many of Carter's supporters, even some of his close aides, misread their man; one of them now deciphers him as "a man with a faith in the certified experts." Carter has emphasized the system's need to be reorganized. His real 1976 platform was his person—that he was the best of all of them to direct the *status quo* efficiently, to improve it cautiously, to restore confidence and consensus.

At times moderation can be both a virtue and an imperative; perhaps Carter can escape the extremes of sacrificing arms control in the cause of Andrei Sakharov or silently consenting to Soviet repression. But the Eisenhower analogy teaches a last lesson: his moderation in all things left a legacy of neglected problems that engulfed the country in the next decade. We now face a flood of crises. We're short of energy, the very basis of our economy; we're fouling our environment, the support system of life; even the climate seems to be turning against us. And beneath the surface nostalgia for national unity, there are signs of a profound alienation. Several of the calls to the presidential phone-in sounded a deep resentment against economic privilege—even to the extent of asking whether the populist First Family was "mooching off the taxpayers," as Carter himself phrased it in his answer. Getting by and feeling better now may prove to be bad or worse later. For, as we discovered in the 1960s, we no longer can depend on Lord Bryce's caustic comfort that "Divine Providence has under its special protection children, idiots, and the United States of America." A Democratic Eisenhower may be what we want and have, but, in the end, not what we need. ●

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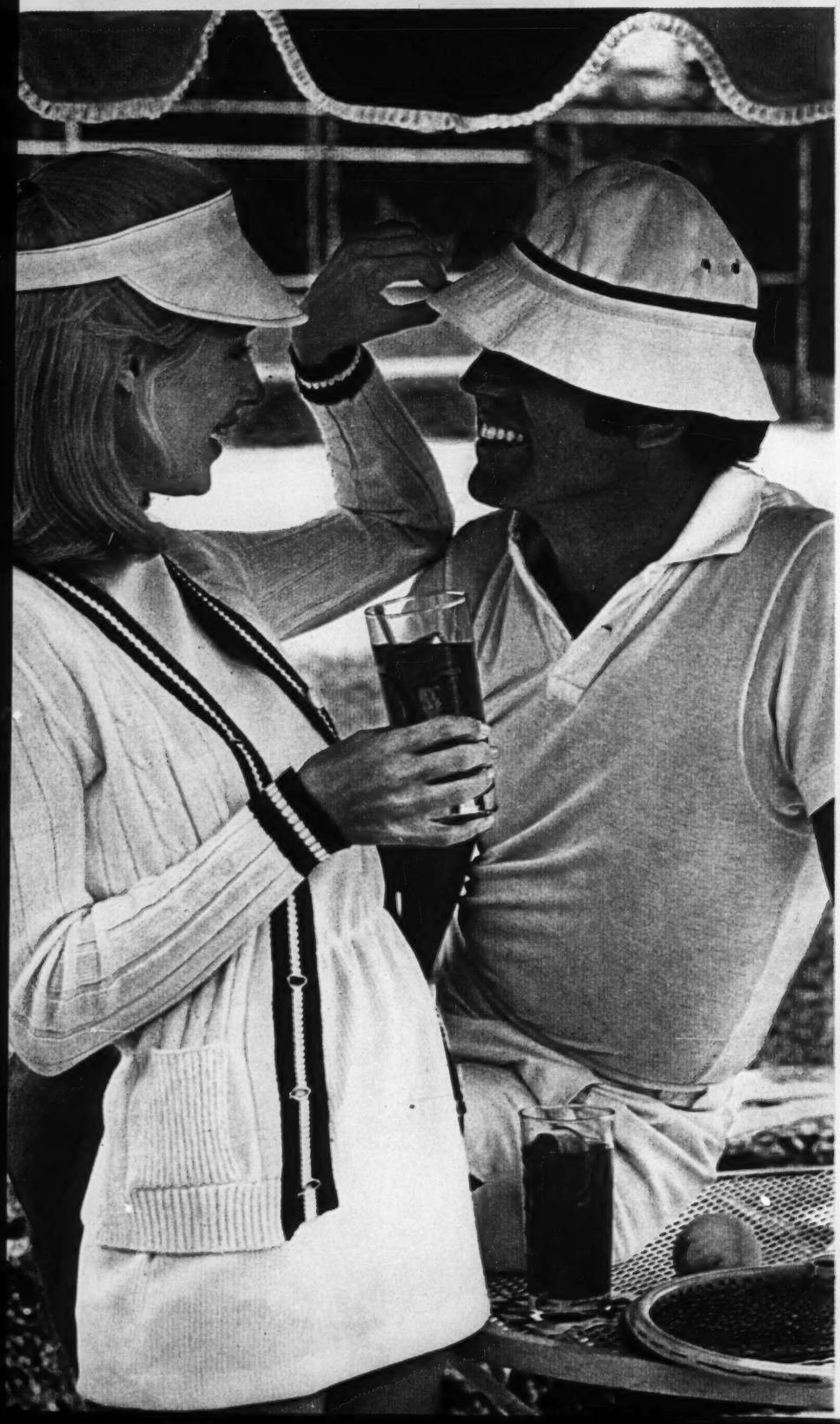

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The Insider

Carter offers mummy not money/Is alcoholism a genetic hangover?

Politics

Tut for tat at the White House

When presidential counsel Robert Lipschutz took the new salary schedule for White House staff to the President for his approval, Carter "blew up," reports a White House source. The pay raise for the legislature and the rest of the executive branch (aside from the President's men) went into effect automatically when Congress didn't veto it or vote it through; a similar raise for his staff needed only Carter's signature. The signature didn't come. The raises were "too much," the President told Lipschutz: for example, 25-year-old Rick Hutcheson, presidential staff secretary, was slated to receive a hike to $50,000 a year. Carter told Lipschutz to come back with more acceptable recommendations.

White House staff members now growl about the decision. They complain Carter had already supported raises for everyone else, and figure besides that they deserve reimbursal for the long *gratis* hours they worked on the campaign. Some compensation of a sort came through, though. A memo informed them that anytime they wanted to go see the King Tut exhibit at the National Gallery of Art, they could slip through to the front of the huge lines. No one is unimpressed with the honor of getting such easy access to the pharoah, but as one aide said, trying to show no disrespect for a visiting head of state, "I'd rather have the money."

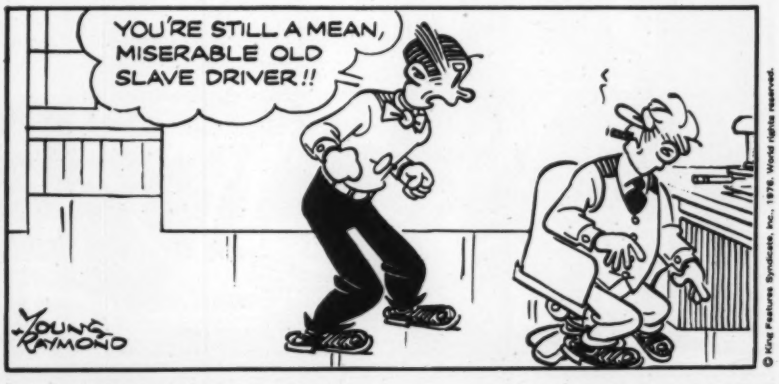
Capturing the Hanafi Muslims: Ten gunmen vanished

Ten of our Hanafis are missing

During the recent siege on Washington, the FBI put a trace on Hanafi Muslims. Ten, it seemed, had dropped out of sight. All ten were well trained in the use of arms.

Their disappearance, reports say, had at least a couple of consequences in the way the government dealt with the land pirates. In the first place, it militated against the authorities just waiting out the Hanafis. Those who wondered why the government didn't hold on instead of making its soft settlement weren't aware of the potential (in the G-men's eyes) for another set of abductions.

The existence of the missing band also made the government more serious about keeping any agreements they made with Khaalis—the threat of Hanafi reprisals for any betrayal of the negotiated agreements loomed in the figures of those ten vanished gunmen.



Telling the boss off at the White House

Grand old gambit

House Minority Whip Robert Michel's recent suggestion that Republicans consider reversing their traditional support for right-to-work laws had an obliquely interesting strategy. It was designed to test out a national strategy involving more than Michel's cover rationale of making a GOP peace with organized labor. The core thinking of the Republican plan goes like this: By supplying enough votes in Congress to repeal 14-B (the Taft-Hartley provision allowing the states to provide right-to-work laws), Republican members could cripple Democratic liberals from states that *do* have the laws by forcing them to choose between labor and their constituencies.

A typical victim would be

Dick Clark: Set to be snared

Senator Dick Clark (D-Iowa). Clark's trouble will start if popular Governor Robert Ray runs against him in 1978. A right-to-work repeal vote could put him on the ropes.

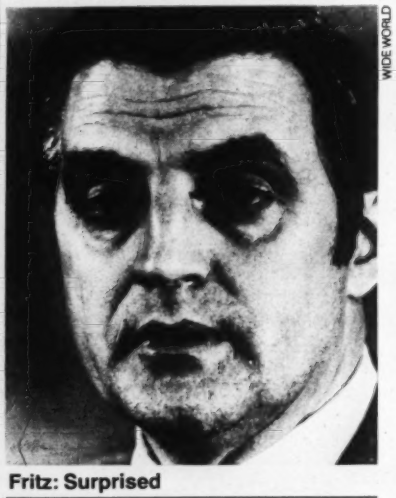
The biggest cheese involved in the Republican strategy is the President of the United States. His southern base holds its right-to-work beliefs with a passion comparable only to its feelings for Tara and Jerry Jeff Walker. If Carter (who during the campaign pledged he'd sign a right-to-work repeal) got mixed up on the liberal side of the fight, it would almost surely hurt him badly. If he landed on the other side, it would mean that he had lied to us.

"Maybe we could split the

unholy alliance of northeastern and southern support for Carter," anticipates one Republican who worries that the plan won't work because of his own ranks. "We won't do it," he moans. "We're too damn ideological for our own good."

FYI, Fritz

Vice President Mondale had two recommendations to the President turned down recently. First, Carter



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Fritz: Surprised

decided to reject the idea of regional presidential primaries, a reform Mondale had sponsored as a senator and urged upon Carter after the inauguration. Mondale also co-authored a long memorandum with Senator Birch Bayh (D–Ind.) asking Carter to replace the Electoral College with direct popular election. The Vice President thought he had at least a tentative agreement with the President on the matter, so he was surprised to find out Carter all but endorsed the current system in response to a press conference question.

The ethics of Cannon

The United States Senate, currently considering an ethics reform proposal similar to the one passed overwhelmingly last month by the House of Representatives, has decided to duck the issue of misuse of congressional staff.

Senator Dick Clark, the Democratic reformer from Iowa, tried to get restrictions on improper use of official staff included as an amendment to a proposed Senate Code of Conduct. But in bill-drafting sessions, it was agreed that a substitute amendment would be offered to delete Clark's reforms and refer the whole issue to the Senate Rules Committee.

That's like inviting the fox to watch after the chickens, because the Rules and Administration Committee is chaired by Howard Cannon, Democrat of Nevada, one of the most guilty members of the Senate in terms of abusing his staff. Cannon's recent reelection campaign was virtually run, steered and staffed by aides in the senator's office, and it was Cannon, as chairman of the Senate Ethics Committee during the last Congress, who is principally responsible for the Senate's failure to adopt a Code of Ethics.

Cannon, as chairman of Rules and Administration, is a sort of Wayne Hays of the Senate. No, he doesn't keep a nonworking mistress on the payroll. But he does exercise control over most of the Senate's housekeeping functions, from committee budgets to parking spaces, and he is widely feared by senators and staff as a capricious crank.

According to information provided by three sources from Cannon's office, Cannon has misused his Senate staffs in violation of existing statutes and Senate rules, not to mention whatever new restrictions Cannon's committee may consider imposing to curtail future abuses.

Cannon assigned employees of his Senate office of the Rules and Administration Committee, and of other committees and subcommittees he sits on, to work as aides in his reelection campaign during 1975 and 1976, according to the sources.

Among those who reportedly worked on campaign-related tasks are:

- Chester B. Sobsey, Cannon's chief administrative assistant, who is paid $40,000 a year, and who, as Cannon's campaign manager and chief fundraiser, was in charge of both the campaign and the Senate office.
- Janene Assuras, Cannon's personal secretary, who worked most of spring, 1975, helping to organize a Las Vegas fundraising dinner which netted Cannon over $250,000, and who "spent most of the summer" doing campaign work in Nevada, according to two sources.
- Christine E. Poel, a former secretary to Sobsey paid partly from a payroll for Armed Services Committee legislative assistance, who was a full-time campaign bookkeeper and finance coordinator from March until September of 1975, and who continued campaign fundraising activities until she resigned in August, 1976.

Contacted this week, Poel insisted that she had not done "exclusively" campaign-related work, saying, "After September [of 1975], I did some Senate work." Poel referred questions to her former boss, Sobsey.

- A research assistant, Elaine Backman, paid from funds intended for legislative assistance to the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, spent a total of over two months in Nevada in 1975 compiling a detailed statewide political analysis of voting trends in each of Nevada's electoral precincts.

Asked this week about the analysis, Backman said she had no copies of the study, and declined to be interviewed about it. "I don't have any copies of that analysis," she said.

- An $18,000-a-year special assistant to Cannon, William G. Kroger, who according to two sources worked on the campaign as a press aide and assisted Sobsey in setting up coffee klatsches and campaign organizing in Nevada, and who also frequently brought political contributions for Cannon into the office from a Washington post office box. Kroger was reluctant to discuss his role in the campaign, but asserted,

WIDE WORLD

Cannon turns ethics to fodder

"Everything I did . . . 90, no, 99 percent of my stuff was Senate business."

Other Cannon aides provided additional campaign, fundraising and political media services, according to the Cannon sources.

To some extent, the suggestion that Senate staffers worked on Cannon's fundraising efforts is supported by reports that the Howard Cannon Dinner Committee filed with the Secretary of the Senate and the Federal Election Commission.

The "registration form and statement of organization for political committees" filed on February 18, 1975, lists Chester B. Sobsey under "principal officers of the committee," as having the title of "coordinator." Sobsey is Cannon's chief administrative assistant, and Senate payroll records showing his $40,000-a-year salary indicate that he has taken no leaves of absence to work on political fundraising.

Yet Sobsey did work extensively on fundraising. Sobsey is also listed in expenditure reports as having been paid for such stated purposes as "reimbursement of fundraising expenses," "refreshments and lunches for volunteers and various contributors."

"Campaigns are Chet's whole thing, he makes no bones about it," one source said. "He was out there [in Nevada] almost the entire time, and called constantly in terms of those things. . ."

Contacted last week in Cannon's office, Sobsey said he couldn't recollect just how much time he had spent on his boss' reelection campaign. "Several weeks, but not all at one time," he said.

Sobsey denied that his secretary had prepared campaign finance reports, but conceded, "I don't suppose it's impossible that I would ask my secretary on occasion to type it.

"I was not the campaign manager, we had paid campaign managers and every [Senate] staff member who participated in any way volunteered whatever assistance they gave." But Sobsey couldn't name a single salaried campaign fundraiser.

The Cannon Dinner Committee reports also indicate at least casual involvement in the campaign by Sara Denton, manager of Cannon's Senate office in Las Vegas, where staffers allegedly devoted office hours to addressing fundraising solicitations in spring, 1975. Denton is reported as having been twice reimbursed in March and April, 1975, for the purchase of a total of $600 worth of postage stamps.

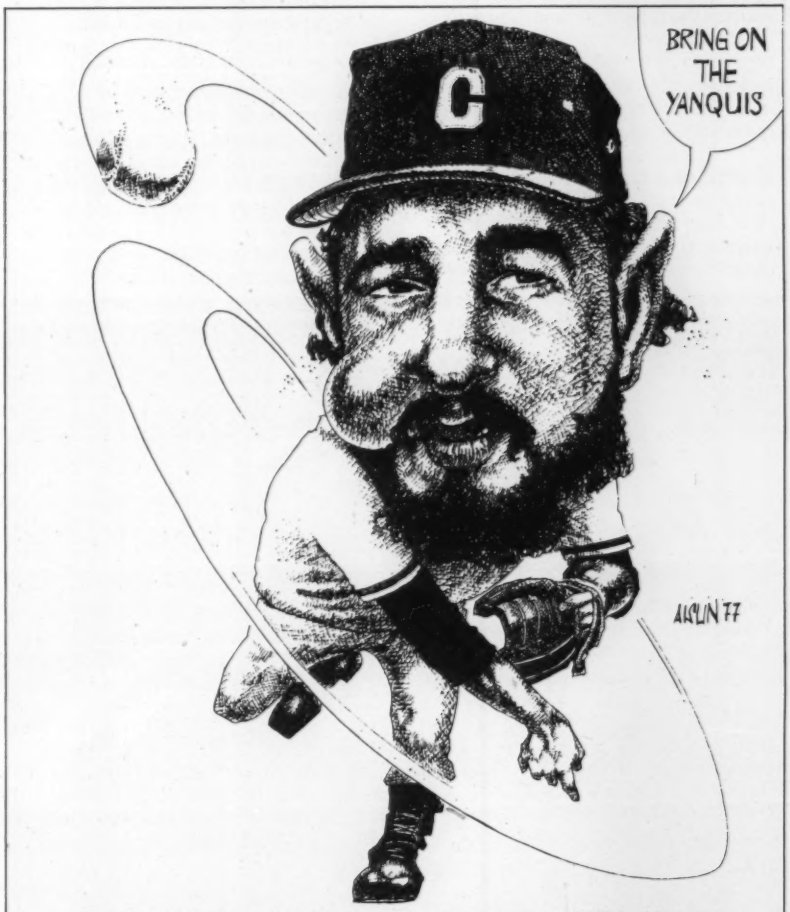
At least four other members of Cannon's Senate office and committee staffs are listed in the Dinner Committee reports as having been reimbursed for expenditures made on behalf of the fundraising committee.

The practice of using congressional aides for primarily personal or political purposes is not specifically prohibited by any statute. However, in contemplating prosecution of former Congressman Wayne Hays for having an employee on his staff who performed primarily personal services, prosecutors considered applying sections of the U.S. criminal code dealing with making false statements to the government (the payroll vouchers), conspiracy to defraud the government, and mail fraud, according to a Justice Department source.

There is also the possibility that Cannon might find himself involved in civil litigation over the use of his taxpayer-financed staff for purposes unrelated to his official legislative or representational duties.

A Justice Department spokesman last week confirmed that the department is considering filing a civil suit against Wayne Hays to recover the salary paid to Hays' former mistress, Elizabeth Ray, while she was on a House payroll and performing only nonofficial duties for the former congressman.

The present and former Cannon staffers who provided information for this article asked not to be identified, for fear that they would lose their jobs. But they all said they would willingly talk to Justice Department attorneys in the event the department decides to take legal action. — *Ed Roeder*



Premier Fidel Castro (who has a good sidearm) asked the New York Yankees to play *beisbol* in Cuba, but the American game's Czar Bowie Kuhn quashed the notion. The idea is not, however, dead yet. Back when Barry Jagoda used to run an event-packaging-for-media company, he discussed an All-Stars vs. Cuba game with Commissioner Kuhn; Jagoda wanted to merchandise it. After Jagoda went to the White House to become President Carter's media adviser, Kuhn became adamant that an All-Star team would be the *only* team to play Castro's Callaberos. "The White House does not care which team goes," says Jagoda, speaking for his new, not his old, firm, but Kuhn does. Fidel Castro, soaking his elbow in dill juice, just wants to see nine Americans with gloves, and maybe Jerry Kapstein.

Seventies

Unfriendly fire

When the St. Paul, Minnesota, fire inspectors came to investigate the Ash Wednesday burning of a Planned Parenthood clinic, it didn't take a Poirot to figure that an arsonist had been at work. The phantom perpetrator being fingered for the crime was "a climate of violence," a strange figure to be found in the commercially-zoned area where the hottest fires usually come from Burger King down the street.

But the Highland Park fire seemed to be the expression of a community that had been tense for almost a year, and perhaps showed an indication that the middle class had learned the type of political activism that had done so much for radicals in the sixties: the mobilization of picketers, the mass-distributed inflammatory leaflets and variations on guerrilla theater.

Although the unfriendly fire itself couldn't have been predicted, one might have guessed that Highland Park would react with fury. From the beginning, the community had tried to drive Planned Parenthood away. Offers to buy them out, dollar for dollar, came in from the new neighbors of the clinic. A month after Planned Parenthood set up, an overflow crowd rallied in the junior high school and started petitions collecting 10,000 names committed against the clinic. The signers organized pickets of the building and telephone campaigns.

Beginning in October, antiabortion protesters walked in front of the building, grim groups of marchers taken from a volunteer pool of 400. They marched nine-to-five every day. Two types of leaflets were distributed: one variety purely antiabortion and stressing health risks, the other suggesting to recipients that unwanted elements would impose themselves in *their* neighborhoods too.

Things got ugly. The pickets threatened to take pictures of women entering the clinic and jotted down license plate numbers for identification later. Kit Briggs, the director of the clinic, remembers odd, ugly exchanges—the mother with two children who called Briggs a baby murderer, comparing her to Hitler and the Nazis and saying she wished the clinic would burn to the ground with Briggs in it.

John Healy is the community organizer and he has a black eye. It's from a hockey game. "A good part of Planned Parenthood's problem," he says, "is that they did no market research at all. They just took advantage of existing zoning. And to say that an activity like abortion, which was illegal until three or four years ago, can now be practiced on every street corner zoned for it is a little too strong." Healy won't say that he is necessarily against abortion; he says that he won't stand for the community losing control of its own development. "Look at the Vietnamese War or the American Revolution," he says. "It's the natives who win these things."

Lobbying against Healy's natives, Jean Druker had her own set—the Concerned Neighbor's Coalition. In January, she planned an open house for Planned Parenthood. The antiabortionists infiltrated with a strange kind of political theater. They overran the clinic, pulled open drawers and asked, "Is this where you keep the dead babies?" They brought in students from St. Thomas Academy, a nearby Catholic school, who marched through the building with armbands reading "NO!" Ominous talk was heard all afternoon about "baby murderers." A shouting match broke out when a livid woman said she hoped the building would burn to the ground.

Ash Wednesday, her wish was granted. Somebody pried a door open, splashed flammable liquid down a hallway and torched the building. Within minutes, the third floor's temperature pushed 2,000 degrees, the typewriters began to melt and the roof buckled.

Since then the clinic's supporters have gone to the streets too, and tension in the community has

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL SHAMBROOM

Planned Parenthood pulverized

PHOTOGRAPH BY LOUIS CAPOZZOLA

The Crunch: Abe Beame, Mayor of New York, moonlights as a disco teacher at Manhattan's trendiest private club, Gracie Mansion. "Get him in step, he looks awful," moaned Mary Beame. "He has no rhythm at all"

heightened. Druker's group marched on the State Capitol and Briggs has vowed that the neighborhood's PP clinic will rise again. John Healy is convinced that the intruders are on their way out. "Who wants to wake up each morning," he asks, "to face a bunch of people who don't want you there?" Briggs won't say whether she wants to or not; she'll only say that it will take more than a fire to get rid of the Planned Parenthood clinic that she runs. The brick shell stands with boarded windows in Highland Park, with the voices of the community spray-painted on its walls. The middle-class graffiti looks at first like it should read "Stop the War" but says instead: "Death," "Dachau" and "Abortion Kills!" Inside, charred desks have been stacked in a hallway, singed paper is piled in rows, insulation droops in sick pink strands from the ceiling, and workers move among it all trying to make some sense of the debris. —*Tony Schmitz*

Guilt by acquaintance

The Allenwood Federal Prison Camp in the rolling hills of Montgomery, Pa., is called a "gentleman's prison." There are no high guard towers, no bars on windows, no chain gangs. The 467 prisoners are mostly nonviolent crooks: white-collar criminals, government informants who bargained their way in, drug dealers, ranking organized crime figures. Watergate burglar Gordon Liddy is there. So is inmate #01150–134, Jay Weiner.

Weiner is the Temple University student and freelance sportswriter who is alleged to have visited a farmhouse used as a hideout by the Symbionese Liberation Army in South Canaan, Pa., in July 1974. Weiner, in fact, is alleged to have celebrated his 20th birthday at the farmhouse with well-wishers Patty Hearst, William and Emily Harris, Wendy Yoshimura, Phillip Shinnick, Paul Hauk, and Jack and Miki Scott. Quite a party.

Except for the Harrises, the rest of the farmhouse party is free. The birthday boy, however, is not.

Weiner was jailed last November 30 for contempt of court. He had refused to answer two questions concerning Shinnick before a federal grand jury in Scranton, despite a grant of immunity. It was the third grand jury in two years in Pennsylvania's Middle District to investigate the S.L.A. farmhouse summer, and Weiner's fourth subpoena in the case. No indictments have been produced.

Why won't Weiner talk? "I'm not in jail to protect friends," he says. "I simply believe that no state can have the ability or power to take away my

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PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB DROGIN

Jay Weiner at Allenwood Prison. The black-shirted figure over his shoulder is a fellow resident, G. Gordon Liddy

silence, my right not to talk."

Weiner calls the investigation a witch hunt and calls himself a political prisoner. "It's no different from Argentina or South Africa," he says. "I'm in jail without a trial, and without having been convicted of any crime."

Why should the government care about Weiner, who has not himself been charged with a crime? U.S. Attorney John Cottone, who has supervised the investigations of all three grand juries, refuses to comment other than to say, "He has no reason not to testify."

If he doesn't agree to testify, Weiner won't be released from Allenwood until the judge lets him out, or the government withdraws its subpoena. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has upheld the contempt citation, and the U.S. Supreme Court last month declined to review his case. He could remain in prison until July 25, when the Scranton grand jury's term expires.

Dressed in Army fatigues, green running shoes and sweat socks, and his black hair well over his collar, Weiner spends his time exercising, keeping a journal, reading (28 books so far, he says, including Marx, Trotsky, Faulkner and Lessing) and tutoring other prisoners. Because he has not actually been sentenced to prison, Weiner does not get paid for his prison work, or receive other Allenwood perks like furlough or time off for good behavior.

What happens when he gets out? He wants to see Jack and Miki Scott, with whom he corresponds from prison. The Scotts allegedly brought Weiner to the S.L.A. farmhouse and are the announced target of the Scranton grand jury. "We'll have a lot to talk about," Weiner says with a laugh.

—Bob Drogin

Mind & Body

Warm the formula, make it a double

The unproven but increasingly accepted notion that alcoholism is a disease instead of a bad habit has received impressive scientific corrobation. Two studies in Denmark suggest that, among men at least, dipsomaniacs harbor a genetic predisposition toward heavy drinking.

In the first study, a team of psychiatrists from Washington University in St. Louis compared the sons of alcoholics to those of nonalcoholics. To eliminate the possibility of parental influence, the investigation was limited to adoptees who had been removed from their true parents very early in life. Even then, the sons of heavy drinkers turned out to be twice as prone to alcoholism as the sons of nondrinking parents. They also suffered significantly more psychiatric disorders.

These findings were reinforced by the second study. It compared those siblings who had remained with their original alcoholic parents and those who had been given up for adoption in infancy. Both groups developed comparably high rates of alcoholism.

Results of both studies indicate, the psychiatrists said, that environmental factors contribute little, if anything, to the development of alcoholism, while genetic factors appear to play a highly significant role.

Nuts to the blues, guys

A drug used to enlarge small testicles may be good for the male blues as well. In a study at a Worcester, Mass., hospital, mesterolone, a synthetic male hormone, worked where all other known therapies had failed to cure men of chronic depression.

All told, 26 men with hard-to-treat depression were tested for seven weeks. Half received mesterolone pills and half inert pills. Neither the patients nor the researchers knew which group received the real thing, a "double-blind" procedure which ensures unbiased results. At the end of the period, none of the men on placebos had recovered but 11 of the 13 men on mesterolone had. The drug caused no apparent harm and even produced one positive side effect: enhanced sex drive.

The chief researcher, endocrinologist Edward Klaiber, wants to do more testing before making any optimistic claims, but he says results so far strongly suggest that mesterolone is a "fast, effective antidepressant for men."

Post Scripts

Kidnap tap

(*NT*: March 4, 1977)

Tony Kiritsis, the kidnapper who held mortgage executive Dick Ward for three days in Indianapolis is a man of, to say the least, unpredictable temperament. One of the keys to ending his siege was the charting of his moods. One device behavioral expert Patrick Mulaney employed was listening to tape recordings of Kiritsis' phone calls. Now a legal mess storms in Indianapolis over those tapes. They have been destroyed. The tapes were made by the Indiana state police on Indiana Bell equipment and in the command post at the apartment complex. The state police are refusing comment and Indiana Bell denies allegations that copies or dubs were made, or that they were a party to the tapes' destruction. The issue of the tapes has sparked a legal drama as intense as the court case itself.

Kiritsis' defense attorney is Owen Mullins, a razzle-dazzle criminal defense specialist with an amazing acquittal rate. He has demanded that prosecutor James Kelly be removed from the case because he promised immunity as well as participated in the tapping of Kiritsis' phone without a court order. Mullin also charges that after "obtaining evidence illegally, the prosecutor allowed the tapes to be destroyed."

Kelly says the tapes were legal because the phone was used as an "instrumentality of the crime." There is no state law permitting or prohibiting wiretaps, Kelly reasons, "no state law could have been broken." Kelly also says inherent power was assumed.

Mullin says the omnibus crime control act makes wiretapping without court order a federal crime. Mullin has been quoted as saying he believes there are copies of the tape.

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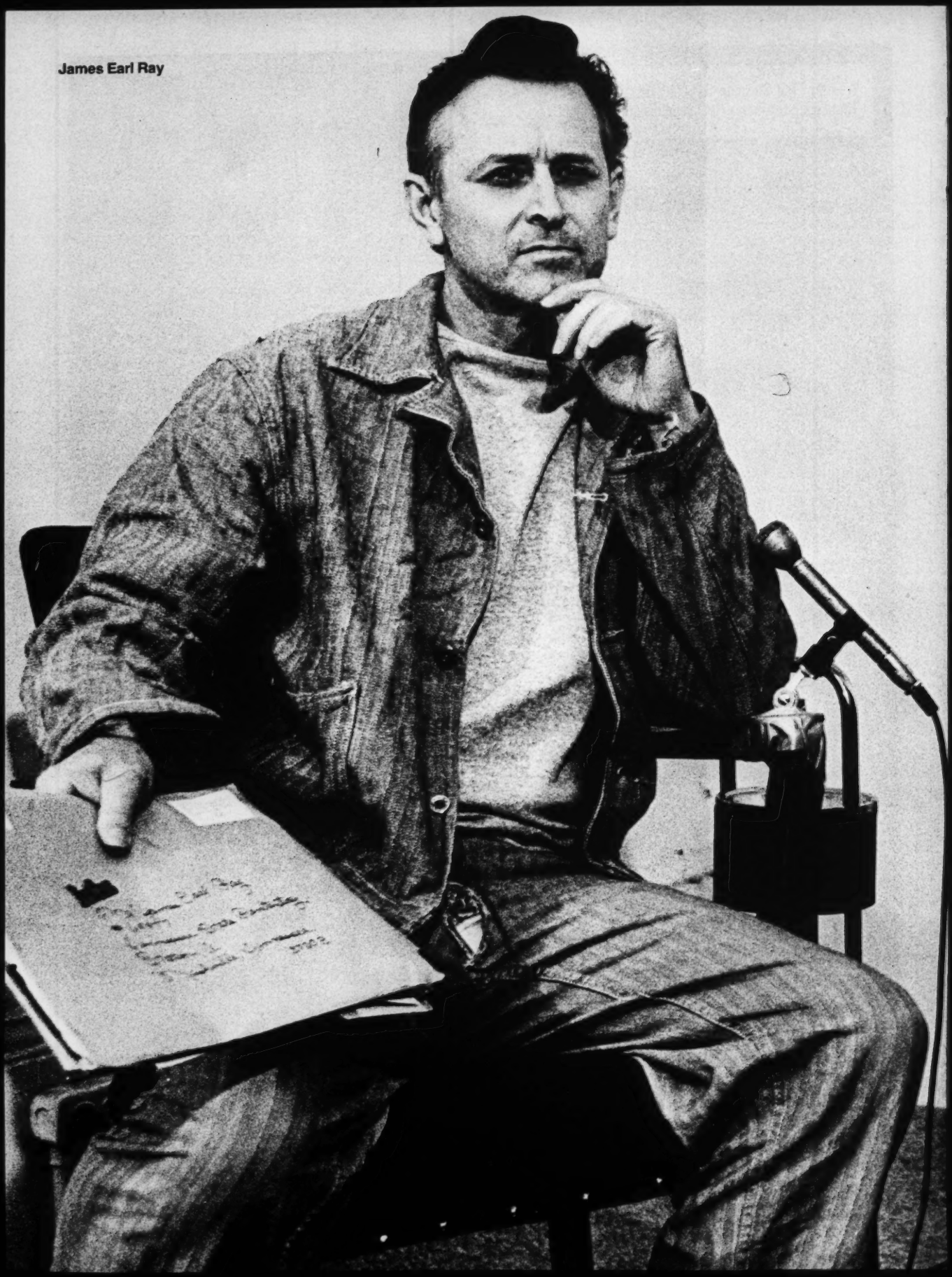

James Earl Ray

It has been exactly nine years since the assassination of Martin Luther King, yet still the question rankles: Who slew the dreamer? This startling new look at the evidence strongly suggests that James Earl Ray did not act alone. The answer to who aided and abetted him may lie very close to home **By Jeff Cohen and David S. Lifton**

A MAN HE CALLS RAOUL

One moment he was standing there, smiling, telling his friend to sing "Precious Lord" at the rally that night. Then a sound: a single, deafening roar. And, in the next instant, he was gone. Martin Luther King was dead, slain by an assassin's bullet.

Nine years have passed since that cool April evening at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, eight years since an escaped convict named James Earl Ray stood in a Tennessee courtroom and pleaded guilty to the crime. And still the question remains: Who slew the dreamer? Who killed Martin Luther King?

It all should have been settled by now. On the face of it, the evidence was overwhelming: A rifle of the same caliber of the gun that killed King found just yards from the scene of the crime, with Ray's fingerprints on it. An FBI investigation that included the largest (self-proclaimed) manhunt in history. And later an investigation of the investigation—a Justice Department probe of the FBI's handling of the case, concluding that there was no conspiracy, that James Earl Ray, acting on his own, did, in fact, shoot and kill Martin Luther King. And then there was Ray himself, guilty by his own plea.

And yet it nags: the loose ends, the unanswered questions, the FBI's own hate campaign against King, Ray's courtroom outburst when the state declared that there was no conspiracy. His guilty plea, in exchange for a sentence of 99 years and in lieu of a trial, was a little too neat; it could hardly resolve the lingering doubts about how a small-time, chronically inept criminal such as James Earl Ray, with no ostensible motive, no violent past and no visible means of support, could raise the nearly $10,000 he spent in three countries before the assassination, and then elude his pursuers for two months after the assassination, using several aliases and a false passport in his flight to Europe. Even Attorney General Griffin Bell, who recently announced the Justice Department's latest finding of no conspiracy, confessed that he had been "puzzled" by Ray's finances and travels.

Originally, the FBI had tried to prove that Ray himself financed his wayward travels through the proceeds of crime. The Justice Department report describes in detail how Bureau headquarters in Washington ordered every FBI office in the country to cull through every unsolved robbery and burglary that had occurred between Ray's April 1967 prison escape and his ultimate capture at London's Heathrow Airport, to see if any of them could be linked to James Earl Ray. In Canada, where Ray lived for a month in the summer of 1967 and again immediately after the assassination, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police issued a similar directive. The end result of all this activity was that not one crime could be tied to Ray. In the end, Justice Department investigators were forced to conclude that Ray's finances—the money he used while allegedly planning, committing and escaping from the assassination—"still remain a mystery."

Ray's financial support, if the most glaring hole in the government's contention that Ray acted alone, is far from the only one. The government could not produce a single reliable eyewitness who could place Ray at the scene of the crime. The landlady who rented the alleged sniper's nest to "John Willard" was not able to identify Ray as her tenant. Witnesses who did see the apparent assailant described him as dark-complexioned, balding, with a long, pointed nose, and between the ages of 26 and 32. On the basis of their information, a police artist drew a sketch of the alleged assassin. It did not look like James Earl Ray, then 40, pale, full of hair and fresh from pre-assassination plastic surgery that had shortened his nose.

Nor could the FBI match the slug taken from King's body with the rifle

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT JOHNSON/BLACK STAR

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH LOUW

Memphis, April 4, 1968: King's aides (including Andrew Young, on left) point to the assassin's lair

found at the scene of the crime, which Ray had purchased at a Birmingham gun shop five days before. Nor could it explain how Ray, who had never been to Memphis before, was able to find his own way to a perfect sniper's lair.

There were other, vexing problems, such as how Ray acquired the four near-perfect aliases he used in his travels: Eric Starvo Galt, John Willard, Paul Bridgman and Ramon Sneyd. The names corresponded to real men who resided in the same Toronto suburb; three of the four bear a marked resemblance to Ray. Galt and Ray even have matching scars —on the forehead and right palm.

Taken alone, the aliases are a small thing perhaps, but in fact they are just part of the large body of evidence indicating that in his historic crime, James Earl Ray did not act alone. It is a notion that he himself has always insisted upon.

"Raoul"

Both before and since his guilty plea, Ray persistently has declared that he was an unwitting victim of a conspiracy—that he was aided, abetted, armed, fed, supplied, shuttled about and ultimately duped by others, others far larger than he. He says he does not know who they were, or what they were about, only the identity of one shadowy man. A man he calls "Raoul."

Raoul. Was there such a person? Who did *he* work for? What was his motive? Who, really, was he?

With meticulous detail, James Earl Ray has described what Raoul did: how they met in a bar in Montreal in 1967, how they entered into a smuggling scheme together, how Raoul promised him money if he would move south, lie low and wait for instructions. How, one fateful day, seven months and thousands of dollars later, those instructions finally came, sending Ray to Memphis with a weapon Raoul had told him to buy; how, on April 4, 1968, James Earl Ray, sitting outside a ramshackle rooming house, heard a shot, and, a moment later, saw Raoul emerging, gun in hand.

Those who believe the state's case—that James Earl Ray, acting alone, shot and killed Martin Luther King—contend that Raoul exists only in Ray's imagination . . . that, as the Justice Department's latest investigation of the case puts it, "Ray's assertions that someone else pulled the trigger are so patently self-serving and so varied as to be wholly unbelievable. They become, in fact, a part of the evidence of his guilt by self-refutation."

And if Raoul actually exists, why won't Ray identify him? The question has been asked since the story first surfaced, and Ray has just as steadfastly refused to answer it. Nothing sways him. Not a promised reduction in sentence offered him by both federal and state authorities in exchange for all he knows about the King assassination, not entreaties from private researchers, not the pleas of his own attorneys. According to Arthur Hanes Sr., his first lawyer, Ray becomes "tense" and "devious" when pressed for more information about Raoul. Hanes' son, Arthur Jr., who assisted in the defense, is more explicit: "When you ask Ray a hard question, like for a better description of Raoul, he hangs his head, runs his fingers through his hair, and says nothing. . . . Then he changes the subject."

Why should Ray protect the man who allegedly set him up? To the Justice Department and others, the answer is simple enough: Raoul is a lie, a non-person in a non-conspiracy. Even journalist William Bradford Huie, who was the exclusive recipient of Ray's 20,000-word narrative and whose articles in *Look* magazine first surfaced the Raoul story, has come to believe that Raoul was not one man, but a composite of several criminal accomplices with whom Ray had contact.

But there remains one other ex-

planation for Ray's determined silence, one as deep and abiding as the bond between brothers.

Jerry

James Earl Ray has a brother—two of them, in fact, both younger than he. The first, with whom he is not as close, is named John Larry, a twice-convicted felon now doing time in Leavenworth on a bank robbery charge. (John Larry's comment to the FBI after the King assassination: "What's all the excitement about? It's only a nigger—King should have been killed ten years ago.") The other, youngest Ray brother is Jerry, a Chicago-area country club handyman with a record of two teenage convictions for robbery. In 1968, Jerry Ray was a devoted lieutenant of Georgia lawyer J. B. Stoner, leader of the racist National States Rights party. James Earl and Jerry Ray are very close.

Just *how* close was a question that interested the Federal Bureau of Investigation from the moment the Bureau identified James Earl Ray as the suspected assassin of Martin Luther King; that day, April 19, 1968, federal agents called on Jerry at his room in the Sportsman Country Club, the first of many encounters between Jerry and the FBI.

It is not surprising that the Bureau was suspicious about Jerry Ray. The original fugitive warrant issued for "Eric Starvo Galt" (James Earl's primary alias) as the assassin of King also named one other suspect: "a man alleged to be his brother." The reference to the alleged brother was drawn from a remark James Earl had made in the Birmingham gun shop where, five days before the assassination, he purchased a 30.06 rifle—and where he explained that he was "going hunting with my brother."

In his first session with FBI agents, Jerry Ray told them that, no, he hadn't seen Jim since visiting him in prison in 1966. It was a lie. Today, now that the statute of limitations has run out, Jerry admits to two meetings with James Earl after the latter's 1967 prison escape: the first, while James was working at a Winnetka, Illinois, restaurant, shortly after the escape; and the second, some months later, when James, returning from Canada en route to Birmingham, transferred ownership of his car to Jerry.

The first person to specifically suggest that Jerry Ray might actually be involved in the King assassination was author William Bradford Huie. When Huie bought James Earl Ray's exclusive story, Ray's lengthy narrative provided a highly detailed account of his 13½-month odyssey, from '67 prison escape to '68 capture, complete with financial

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records, diagrams and maps. That narrative is possibly the most valuable resource in the entire King-Ray case, and during the initial investigative period, William Bradford Huie was the man most familiar with it.

On February 6, 1969, the night before Huie testified before a Memphis grand jury, the Memphis *Commercial Appeal* interviewed Huie and reported: "Huie confirmed that . . . he would name at least one co-conspirator—the individual identified as 'Raoul' in previously published material." The next day, the following exchange took place before the grand jury:

HUIE: I have beliefs and there is one particular individual I am convinced had foreknowledge of the crime. . . .

PROSECUTOR: Would it be a fair statement to you to say that that was James Earl Ray's brother Jerry Ray?

HUIE: That is right. . . . The only man on earth who is close to Ray is his brother Jerry Ray. . . . so it is my opinion that Jerry Ray had foreknowledge of the crime and was in contact with his brother at every strategic moment before and after the crime.

The recently released Justice Department report on the King assassination lends substantial credence to Huie's allegations. While not naming Jerry as a co-conspirator, the report does make it clear that Jerry aided and abetted his brother after his escape from prison, lied to the FBI about the extent and nature of his contacts with James Earl, and would, had the statute of limitations not expired, be liable to prosecution.

"In the task force interview of Jerry Ray," reported the Justice Department, "he confirmed the fact that he had lied to the Bureau and had seen his brother James on several occasions. Jerry denied knowing anything about James' travels or his source of funds. However, the task force found the credibility of Jerry's denials to be suspect . . . we concluded that the FBI abandoned a significant opportunity to obtain answers from family members concerning some of the important questions about James Earl Ray which still remain."

In sum, the Justice Department is vaguely suspicious of Jerry Ray, doubts his credibility and is seemingly perplexed by his association with brother James both immediately before and after the assassination. With far more certainty, the department dismisses Raoul as a self-serving figment of James Earl's imagination.

Yet when the department's own data (including the FBI's) is matched against James Earl Ray's narrative, a startling pattern emerges:

Before the assassination, Ray made numerous remarks to acquaintances and coworkers regarding various contacts with a "brother."

After the assassination, when describing these same contacts to Huie, Ray claimed that they were with Raoul.

This pattern of Jerry/Raoul juxtaposition is so consistent, so *persistent*, as to raise an inescapable question: Are Jerry Ray and Raoul one and the same?

Jerry/Raoul

June, 1967. For almost seven weeks, prison escapee James Earl Ray had been working as a kitchen helper at a suburban Chicago restaurant. He was taking home $94 a week. Jerry Ray was employed at a nearby country club. Author Gerold Frank (who had access to FBI files) reports that during this period, Jerry visited James at least once at the restaurant's back door.

In mid-June, according to William Bradford Huie, James received "three or four pressing calls" at the restaurant that seemed to "excite" him. Interviewed by the FBI, Ray's restaurant employers recalled that the calls had "a visibly disturbing effect" on him.

When his Canadian lover cautioned Ray about his lavish spending, Ray smiled and said, "There's more where that came from"

That week, James Earl Ray suddenly quit his job, and shortly thereafter headed for Canada—although not before (he was to tell Huie) conferring with Jerry.

July, 1967. James Earl arrived in Montreal, he later explained to Huie, on the lam and nearly broke. One day, not long after his arrival, sitting in his favorite hangout, the Neptune Tavern, he met the man who was to change his life—a man called Raoul. Subsequently, they met several times again at the Neptune. Finally, Raoul offered him a proposition:

- Ray was to meet Raoul in Windsor, Canada, on August 21, and to make several smuggling runs that day across the border to Detroit.
- Ray was then to resettle in Birmingham, Alabama, where he was to "lie low, take no risks . . . accumulate a little I.D." He was to wait there for Raoul, who would provide Ray with "living expenses" and a "suitable car."
- After some weeks or months of joint projects, Raoul would provide Ray with $12,000, a passport and help in going "anywhere in the world." Ray had only to abide by one condition: that he ask no questions. Raoul gave him a New Orleans phone number at which he could be reached.

Ray agreed to the proposition.

August 21, 1967. On this, his last day in Canada, Ray said, Raoul gave him a first cash installment.

There is only one problem with this story: the evidence of Ray's Canadian expenditures is completely out of sync with his version of events. Although supposedly almost broke, Ray's life style dramatically improved immediately upon his arrival in Canada. He rented an apartment in Montreal, bought some $300 worth of clothing, vacationed in the Laurentian Mountains, and felt sufficiently flush to treat himself to manicures at the posh Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

Ray told Huie that he had come to Canada with just $300. But after only two days in Montreal, his expenses already totaled *$400*. His known expenses during his stay in Canada totaled at least $1,000. To account for the money, Ray told Huie a tale of having robbed a whorehouse, which later he changed to a food store. In either case, no such robbery was ever reported. It seems clear that Ray invented the hold-up in order to conceal where, when, how and from whom he had received his new funds. Whatever had happened to fatten his bankroll apparently had occurred *before* he came to Canada, in the days just before his departure from Chicago, when the evidence indicates a flurry of contact with brother Jerry.

There is one known witness to Ray's life during his stay in Canada, a woman employee of the Canadian government with whom he had a brief affair during his vacation in the Laurentians. In the chronology of Ray's narrative, the affair would have taken place just before Raoul laid out his proposition.

To Huie, the woman later recalled Ray's excitement about a new business venture—a successful one, apparently, for when she cautioned James Earl about spending his money so lavishly, he smiled and said, "There's more where that came from."

But, to her, Ray mentioned no partner named Raoul; instead, on August 7, the last day of his vacation, he told her he was rushing back to Montreal "to meet his brother" the next day. Ray also told her that his brother was from Chicago and that they worked together "in some sort of business."

The woman's recollections close-

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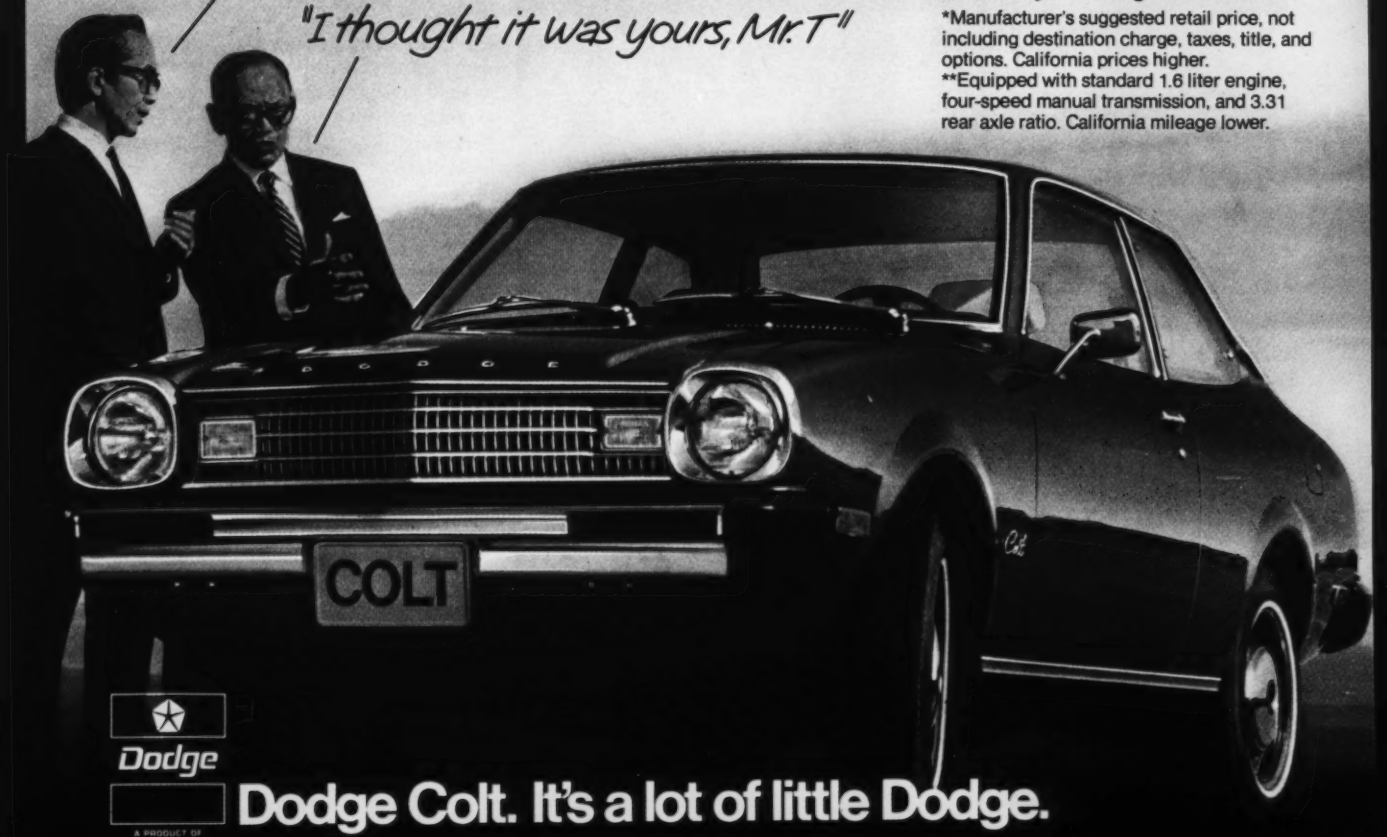

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Aliases: Fugitive Ray (bottom right) used the names of four Toronto residents. Three were very similar to him in age, height, weight and coloring

ly correlate with Ray's story to Huie—except that all of his (pre-assassination) references to his "brother" became (post-assassination) references to Raoul. Ray told Huie that he returned from vacation to meet Raoul in Montreal, not his brother. In Ray's narrative, the only ventures he envisioned were criminal activities with Raoul, not "business" activities with his brother.

In late August, 1967, Ray left Canada and returned briefly to Chicago. The Justice Department reports, "Illinois motor vehicle records showed that James Ray . . . transferred his 1962 Plymouth to Jerry. This was during a period when James Ray was making his way from Canada to Birmingham, Alabama. It has continued to be a mystery as to why Ray went to Alabama, how he traveled there, and where he obtained the several thousand dollars he had when he arrived."

According to James Earl Ray, the money was no mystery at all. He says that five days after he arrived in Birmingham, Raoul came to the city and handed him $2,000 on the street to buy—a few moments later—a car that Ray had spotted in a classified ad: the white Mustang which, seven months hence, would become the getaway car from Memphis and the murder of Martin Luther King.

The evidence supports Ray's account that he was handed the cash just minutes before the purchase. Ray startled the car seller, William Paisley, by counting out an even $2,000 right on the street outside a bank. Although Ray made it appear to Paisley that he had withdrawn the money from the bank just before Paisley arrived, Ray in fact had no account there.

(There is a strange twist to the car transaction. When Paisley was shown a picture of Ray after the assassination, he could not positively identify him as the man to whom he had sold the car. "Are you sure," he asked, "this isn't his brother?")

On October 6, 1967, Ray left Birmingham and headed for Mexico, where he claims to have met Raoul in Nueva Laredo. After a bit of smuggling (jewelry, grass), he vacationed the next month at Puerto Vallarta and Acapulco.

From Mexico, Ray moved to Los Angeles—"on Raoul's instructions"—lying low as ordered, passing his nights in bars and days in various self-improvement endeavors: bartending school, dancing lessons, hypnosis, plastic surgery. He also placed a personal ad for a woman sex partner in the *Los Angeles Free Press* ("SINGLE MALE, Cauc., 36 . . . digs French culture. Write Eric S.").

Ray had been in Los Angeles almost a month when, he says, Raoul summoned him in December to drive cross-country to New Orleans for a "brief conference." Ray did not make the trip alone. His traveling companion was an L.A. songwriter named Charles Stein. At one gas stop, Stein watched Ray talking excitedly into a pay phone; Stein's impression was that Ray was calling ahead to the man he was to meet in New Orleans.

Ray later told Huie "that he made three telephone calls on that trip, two of which were to Jerry Ray." Huie considers the contacts with Jerry at that time important ones. For, during his 36-hour stay in New Orleans, Ray told Huie, Raoul said that they had one more job to do "in about two or three months. Then he said we'd be finished." Three and a half months later, Martin Luther King would be dead.

Ray returned to Los Angeles, only to leave again on March 17, 1968, this time for good. He told Huie that he left on Raoul's orders. But shortly before departing, Ray turned down a job, explaining, "I have to leave to see my brother." According to the Justice Department, he told Richard Gonzales, a

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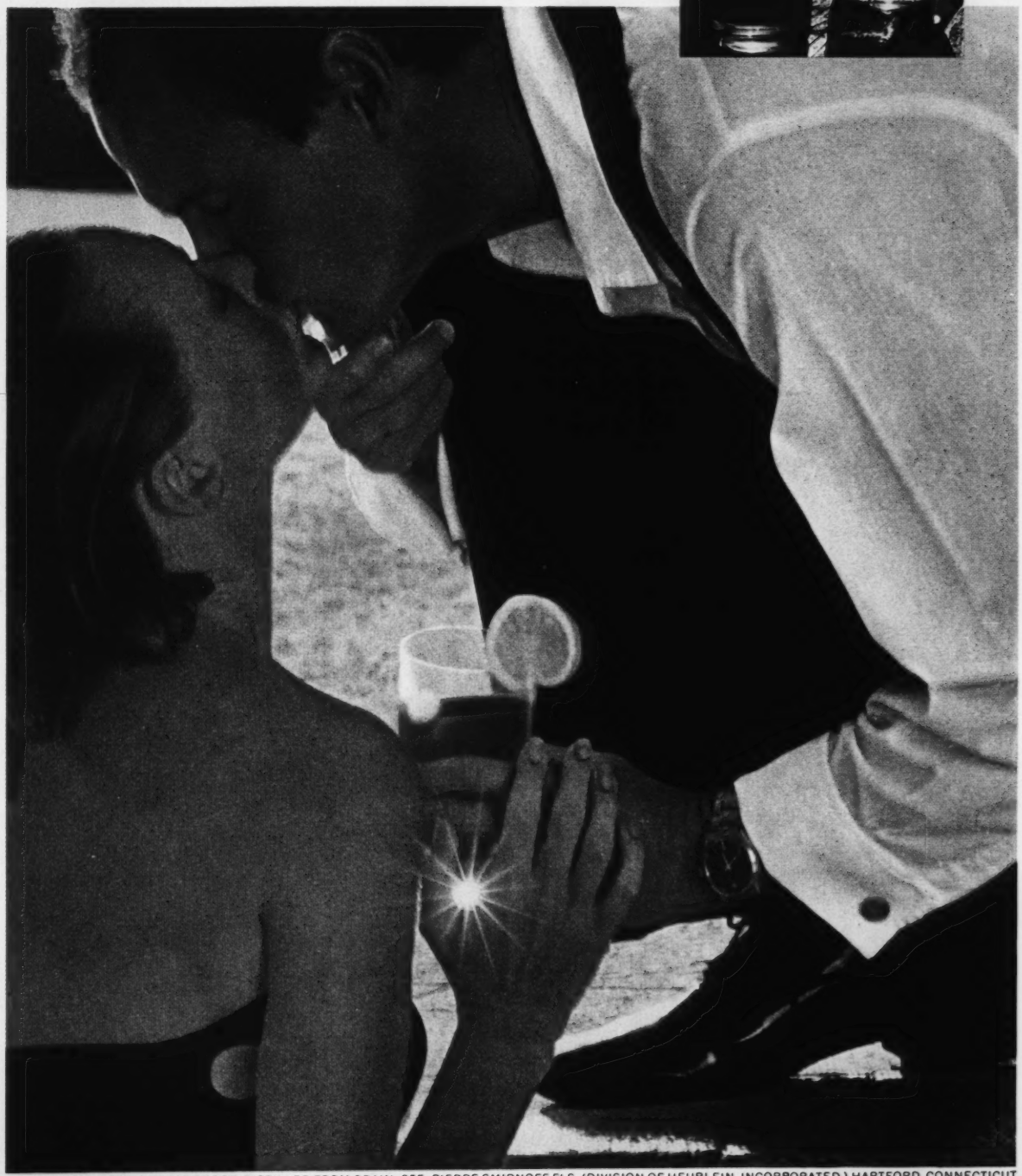

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Jerry Ray

fellow student at the bartending school they attended, that "upon completion of the course he was going to visit a brother in Birmingham for two weeks." To others, he said he was leaving the city to pick up money from his brother.

From L.A., Ray drove to New Orleans, then on to Birmingham where, he says, he picked up Raoul, and together they proceeded to Atlanta, Martin Luther King's hometown. They arrived there late Saturday night, March 23. With Raoul nearby, says Ray, he checked into a rooming house. (It was there, after the assassination, that the FBI discovered a map with one very clear fingerprint of Ray's and—according to the Bureau—the home, church and office of Martin Luther King circled in pencil.)

A week later, Ray returned to Birmingham. Once again (he told Huie after the assassination) he was with Raoul, rather than (as he had told Gonzales in L.A., before the assassination) with his brother. Whoever he was with, Ray's visit lasted only two days; it was long enough for him to purchase a gun.

"Raoul told me . . . to get a large bore deer rifle and gave me over $700," Ray later told Huie. "After the purchase me and Raoul went back to the motel. He looked at the rifle and said it was the wrong kind." So Ray went back to the gun shop, exchanged the rifle for a 30.06, and had it fitted with a telescopic sight, following Raoul's instructions to the letter.

But were they *Raoul's* instructions?

During his first visit to the gun shop, Ray was observed by another customer, a gun enthusiast named John DeShazo. DeShazo could tell by the way Ray was examining the rifle that he obviously knew little about firearms. DeShazo thereupon struck up a conversation with Ray. In an affidavit for the FBI, DeShazo said: "[Ray] stated that he was going deer hunting in Wisconsin with a brother or brother-in-law." Later that afternoon, Ray phoned the gun shop and spoke to salesman Donald Wood. According to Wood's FBI affidavit, "[Ray] stated that he had had a conversation with his brother and had decided to exchange the rifle."

There is one other person who links a Ray "brother" to the gun transaction, and his testimony is the most compelling of all. Percy Foreman was James Earl Ray's second attorney. In a 1974 deposition, Foreman swore that Ray "told me Jerry was with him" when he bought the first rifle. Foreman has repeated his assertion that Jerry Ray was involved in the gun purchase to several newspeople. When questioned about it recently by *New Times*, Foreman made the point again, emphatically: "Goddam it, yes! You think I'm a liar? He told me that. I wouldn't have sworn to it if he hadn't told me." Foreman then added: "I have no reason to doubt, and he had no reason to lie to me when he told me, that Jerry was with him."

April 3, 1968. Three days after the purchase of the sleek new rifle, one day before the assassination of Martin Luther King. Any contact that day between Ray and Raoul—whomever he might be—is obviously critical. Ray claims that he met with Raoul on April 3 in his room at the New Rebel Motel in Memphis. Maybe.

According to author George McMillan, the one person James did talk with for sure on April 3 was Jerry Ray. McMillan, who interviewed Jerry dozens of times during the preparation of a book on the King case, says that Jerry admits to talking with James by phone, from Chicago, the day before the assassination. In his book, McMillan quotes James Earl as telling his youngest brother, "Jerry, tomorrow it will be all over. I might not see you and Jack [brother John Larry] for a while. But don't worry about me. . . . Big Nigger has had it!"

"Jerry," Ray told his brother, "tomorrow it will be all over. Big Nigger has had it!"

William Bradford Huie confirms this account, saying that Jerry told him the same thing late one night during a liquor-fueled meeting in Huntsville, Alabama.

James Earl Ray has said that it was Raoul, using the alias "John Willard," who rented the room in the house from which Martin Luther King was shot on April 4, 1968. As it happens, the landlady's description of "Willard," as well as the descriptions of other eyewitnesses—not to mention the composite drawings that were done of the alleged assassin—do not in fact resemble James Earl Ray, not as much as they do his younger, balding brother Jerry.

There is, finally, Ray's version of his last contact with Raoul: "I was sitting in the Mustang when I heard a shot. In a minute or so, Raoul came running down the stairs carrying my zipper bag and the rifle which was in the box and wrapped up in a bedspread I had brought from California. Just before he got in the car, Raoul turned around and threw the rifle and my zipper bag down on the sidewalk. Then he jumped in the back seat, and covered himself with a sheet, and I took off. After I drove a few blocks, I stopped at a stoplight and Raoul jumped out. I then drove on south to Mississippi. I wasn't thinking about nothing but getting away. I knew that shot meant trouble."

One of the major mysteries of the case involves the white Mustang that Ray abandoned in Atlanta the day after he fled Memphis. When the car was found, cigarette and cigar ashes were littering the floor, and, according to Huie, the car was "reeking with cigar and cigarette smoke." Attorney Arthur Hanes, Ray's first lawyer, says that the car's ashtrays were filled with crushed Viceroys, as was the Memphis room rented by "Willard." The problem is, James Earl Ray does not, and did not, smoke. The obvious conclusion is that someone was with him who did.

Huie told the grand jury: "Ray's explanation to me was that, 'Sure, Raoul was in the car—Raoul smokes.'" But then so does Jerry Ray. Jerry Ray is a chain-smoker.

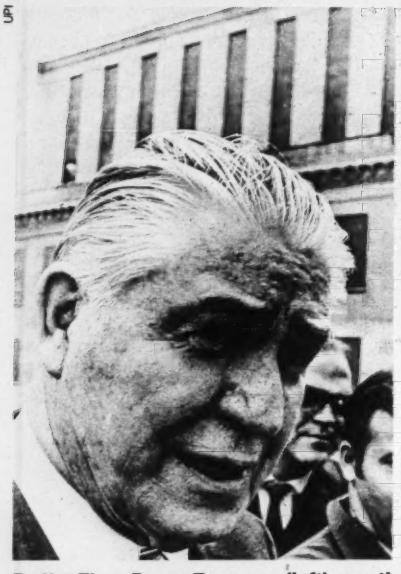
Who, *me?*

It seems like a lifetime or two, but it is less than nine years since Jerry Ray was giving advice via the news media to his fugitive brother, James, the accused assassin of Martin Luther King, first urging him to surrender, then urging him not to, finally encouraging him to flee to a country with no extradition treaty with the U.S. (James, in fact, was on his way to just such a country—Rhodesia—when he was apprehended in London in June 1968.)

Jerry had his own theory of the killing in those days, a theory he readily shared with the press. Sure there was a conspiracy, he would say, a "giant conspiracy" in which his brother had been "used." "Look at all the money he came into all of a sudden—you don't get that kind of money from sticking up grocery stores." The conspirators, he would add, could rest easy—James Earl never has, and never would, rat on a partner. "That runs in the family," Jerry explained.

Three days after his brother's capture, Jerry told a Chicago television reporter, "I don't think he did it. I think he was used as a decoy in some way. I think he was contacted by someone when he escaped. By somebody who knew he was hot." Ironically, only one man ever could be proven to have had such a contact with James Earl Ray. That man was Jerry himself.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARTHUR SHAY



Buffs: Fiery Percy Foreman (left) was the second of numerous Ray attorneys; William Bradford Huie told the world Ray's 20,000-word story

To the notion that he might in any way have been involved with his brother in the murder of Dr. King, Jerry Ray's response is an indignant denial (and in the case of author George McMillan, a hefty lawsuit). He insists that he was in Chicago during the months both before and after the assassination, working the entire time at the Sportsman Club.

"The FBI questioned me for hours and hours," he says. "And they checked where I worked at. I worked there three years, never missed a day. And for four months, I worked seven nights a week. And they knew it was impossible for me to get anyplace, because I can't both work and leave the place." (Jerry Ray also says that the FBI has "cleared" him of any involvement in the assassination, a statement which the FBI categorically denies.)

Jerry further claims that several employees of the Sportsman Club can vouch for him during the assassination period, including the club's day and night managers, the chief administrator and the Glenbrook patrol service. When interviewed by *New Times*, however, none of these alibi witnesses could state with certainty that Jerry had been at the club on the nights in question. The club's chief administrator implied that the club's work records no longer exist.

Gordon Anderson, a patrolman for the Glenbrook patrol service who worked the graveyard shift with Jerry Ray, cannot substantiate Jerry's alibi, since he had left the patrol service two months before the assassination. Anderson does recall, however, that Jerry would "take off" occasionally. "I don't know whether he called it a vacation or not," says Anderson, "but I know he mentioned several times that he went down to see his brother. He would go down to some of the southern states, I don't remember just which ones, and visit him . . . I believe he was sending him money." When pressed for the specific locations that Jerry may have visited, Anderson names St. Louis—and Atlanta and Birmingham as possibilities.

And what if it is all true? What if Jerry Ray *did* slip away from Chicago from time to time in 1967 and 1968 to meet with his brother James in Atlanta, in Birmingham, yes, even in Memphis? What if he *did* guide James in the purchase of a rifle, *did* provide him with funds and instructions? What if, in fact, Jerry Ray *is* Raoul? What then?

"We couldn't see any advantage in killing King," said Stoner. "If I had wanted him killed, I could have had it done years ago"

For one thing, it does not automatically follow that Jerry Ray is a co-conspirator in the slaying of Martin Luther King, any more than the available evidence proves that James Earl Ray fired the fatal shot. Being Raoul is not necessarily a crime.

If, as James claims, he was duped into becoming a patsy in an assassination conspiracy, it is at least equally possible that his brother Jerry was duped as well. Jerry, for instance, might logically have thought he was merely helping James, an escapee from prison, by providing him with cash and shuttling him around the country. In this case, it still would be difficult to explain how Jerry, a menial laborer all his life, could have come up with the thousands of dollars which James Earl Ray says Raoul gave him—unless, of course, Raoul/Jerry himself had a backer.

Thunderbolt

In person, Jerry Ray hardly seems like a liar, or an aider and abettor, as the Justice Department has characterized him, much less a co-conspirator in a momentous assassination plot. He comes off as a harmless, hateless man with gentle eyes and a clowning sense of humor. The years of constant press attention and contact with conspiracy buffs have mellowed and socialized him. His fellow employees at the Sportsman Country Club all remember him as a hard worker, a likable guy. Today, Jerry, 41, works at a predominantly Jewish country club in the Chicago area. "I don't care if someone is black or a Jew or whatever," he says. "If I'm around him long enough, I like him."

But there is another Jerry Ray. "The Jews have been run out of every country," he wrote to a Jewish radio personality in Atlanta in 1972, "and they will eventually be run out of the U.S. It might take another 50 or 75 years, but the Jews are like the Nigger beast, give them a rope and they will hang themselves . . . Robert Kennedy was worse than a Jew if that's possible . . . so I celebrated when he joined the rest of his kind in hell." A follow-up letter to the same broadcaster was so vicious and threatening that it was turned over to the FBI. *This* Jerry Ray is someone else entirely.

In this light, it becomes tempting to see Jerry's contacts with James in the weeks and months preceding the King assassination as nothing more, or less, than a plot by two brothers—a violent, racist rendering of the Hardy Boys. But at least one of the Hardy Boys—Jerry—had at one time a backer, a friend and supporter, who was no laughing matter. His name was Jesse B. Stoner.

To the Jerry Ray who viewed Jews as "devils" and blacks as "beasts," J.B. Stoner was a man for all reasons, a man worth following. At the time of the King assassination, Stoner was cochairman of the National States Rights party, an organization that he once boasted was "more extreme than the Klan."

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Stoner began his career in racism in 1939, at the age of 18, when he became Klan Kleagle, or chief Klansman, for the entire state of Tennessee. Two years later, he founded the Stoner Anti-Jewish party. Its purpose, he explained, was "to make being a Jew a crime punishable by death. . . . We'll just take them out and kill them." As for blacks, Stoner said: "The nigger is not a human being. He is somewhere between the white man and the ape. He is our enemy."

After Stoner became a leader of the National States Rights party, he began publishing a newspaper, *The Thunderbolt*. Emblazoned with the Nazi swastika, the paper branded King "Martin Lucifer Coon." The party's headquarters were decorated with a caricature of King, hanging in effigy; underneath, a caption read, "*N.S.R.P. Answer To The Civil Rights Movement:* 'HANG 'EM HIGH'!"

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Heroes: "When History is written," wrote Jerry Ray (left), "my brother James Earl Ray will be a Hero alongside of J. B. Stoner" (right)

When King began gaining prominence as he moved through the South, organizing the civil rights movement, Stoner and his supporters began trailing him. In one typical incident, in 1964, in St. Augustine, Florida, where King was then leading marches for racial equality, Stoner was credited with inciting a club-wielding white mob in an unprovoked attack on unarmed black demonstrators; as a result of the assault, 19 civil rights marchers were hospitalized. (In Alabama, authorities have long had Stoner under suspicion for the September 1963 bombing of the Birmingham church in which four young black girls were killed.)

Shortly after King's assassination, Stoner's *Thunderbolt* proclaimed: "The man who shot King was actually upholding the law of the land . . . . He should be given the Congressional Medal and a large annual pension for life, plus a Presidential pardon." Stoner himself offered to defend James Earl Ray without charge, as well as to launch a fund-raising campaign on his behalf. Both offers were turned down by Ray's lawyer at the time, Arthur Hanes.

In September 1968, Jerry Ray, a faithful *Thunderbolt* reader, arranged for Stoner to visit his brother in prison. This angered Hanes, contributed to attorney-client friction, and led to his replacement by attorney Percy Foreman. When Foreman in turn was fired after Ray's guilty plea, Stoner promptly stepped into the spotlight, briefly becoming Ray's attorney-of-record. Stoner told the press that his connections with the Klan would help his client's case. "They show I'm a loyal white man," he said, "and the white people [of Memphis] are for white supremacy. King brought about his own death with his activities across the country . . . . He was a troublemaker."

Eventually, it dawned on James that such statements were not helping his case, and Stoner was dropped from the defense team.

But meanwhile, Stoner and *Jerry* Ray—who had met no later than the summer of 1968, and perhaps earlier—were growing ever closer to each other. Jerry not only moved to Savannah, Georgia, but actually moved in with Stoner, whose home included the offices of the NSRP and *Thunderbolt*. Jerry became Stoner's personal bodyguard and chauffeur.

The two men enjoyed a mutual admiration society. "I am sure when History is written," wrote Jerry, "my brother James Earl Ray will be a Hero along side of J.B. Stoner." In turn, Jerry was the guest of honor at an NSRP banquet, where he was introduced as "The Honorable Jerry Ray, brother of James Earl Ray." [Applause.]

In 1970, when Stoner ran against Jimmy Carter and others for governor of Georgia on a white supremacist platform, Jerry was promoted to campaign manager. During the campaign, a 17-year-old youth allegedly broke into Stoner's office and tried to cart away a box of NSRP membership records. Jerry Ray took aim with a .38 caliber pistol and shot him in the chest, seriously wounding him. Jerry was subsequently acquitted of a charge of aggravated assault.

It was two years later that J.B. Stoner gave a most intriguing interview to *Esquire* magazine:

STONER: We couldn't see any advantage in killing King. If I had wanted him killed, I could have had it done years ago. In fact, several years ago the FBI, through an undercover agent, offered me $25,000 to kill King.

ESQUIRE: Why would anyone come to you with that kind of proposition?

STONER: Because I know people who do that kind of work.

ESQUIRE: If Ray was being used in an FBI plot, why doesn't he tell the truth about what he knows?

STONER: Because he doesn't want to hurt others who were duped.

Stoner concluded the interview by saying that he knew the identity of the man James Earl Ray called "Raoul." "Ray became involved in the conspiracy without ever knowing what its aim was," he said. "Ray was directed throughout by an intermediary." Stoner added that he knew who the "contact" was.

J.B. Stoner is still very much around. He was in the news only last month when an NSRP member and *Thunderbolt* subscriber, Fred Cowan, went on a shooting spree in New Rochelle, New York, killing six people—four nonwhite coworkers, a cop, and finally himself. Cowan's siege apparently was triggered by conflicts on the job, a Jewish boss and a growing number of black coworkers. Afterward, *Time* quoted Stoner as saying, "There's no point in our going out and shooting Jews and niggers, because we couldn't get rid of them that way. It has to be a national program."

Over the years, state and federal authorities have come to suspect that Stoner's violent rhetoric cannot be dismissed merely as fascist ravings. This should have been driven home years ago when a surreptitious tape recording was made of J.A. Milteer, a Stoner associate, as he discussed NSRP plans with a Miami police informer. The date was November 9, 1963.

Milteer told the informant that a

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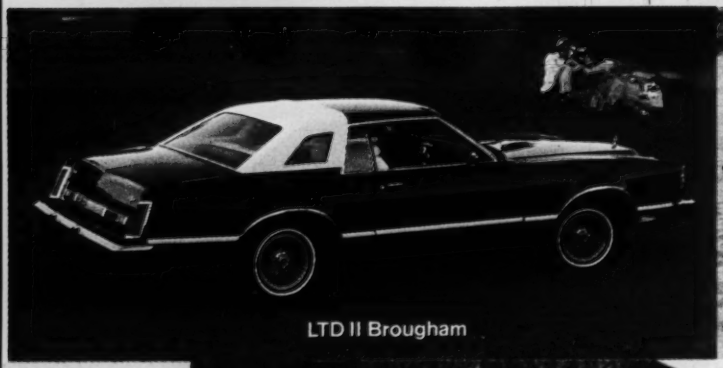
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scheme was in the works to kill President Kennedy. The President, Milteer said, would be shot "from an office building with a high-powered rifle," and a patsy would be picked up "within hours . . . just to throw the public off." The Miami police were sufficiently impressed with Milteer's seriousness that the Secret Service was alerted, and an imminent presidential motorcade into that city was canceled. Two weeks later, after Kennedy had been slain in Dallas, Milteer told the same informant that "everything ran true to form," and that the right wing was in the clear because Lee Harvey Oswald "doesn't know anything."

During the original taped conversation, Milteer also revealed a plot against Martin Luther King, one involving an NSRP hitman named "Brown":

MILTEER: He hasn't said so, but he tried to get Martin Luther King.

INFORMANT: He did?

MILTEER: Oh yes, he followed him for miles and miles, and couldn't get close enough to him. . . .

INFORMANT: Well, he will damn sure do it, I will tell you that . . . that is why we have to be so careful, you know that Brown is operating strong.

MILTEER: He ain't going for play, you know. . . . He is going for broke.

Zorro

Did "going for broke" on the part of Stoner's NSRP ultimately result in the assassination of Martin Luther King? That is one of the many unsettled—and unsettling—questions that continue to surround his slaying nine years ago this month.

Another question, a crucial one: When did Jerry Ray's alliance with J.B. Stoner and the NSRP begin—after the King assassination, or before? Both Jerry and Stoner are evasive on the subject, but at the very latest, the two got together in the summer of 1968.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the entire King-Ray investigation is the uncertain role played throughout by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. There is considerable evidence to indicate that the Bureau's probe was, at best, half-baked and half-hearted, particularly in relation to any possible conspiracy.

Item: For some time prior to the assassination, FBI agents had maintained continual electronic and photographic surveillance of Dr. King. Where were they on April 4, 1968?

Item: James Earl Ray's own detailed chronicle of his 13½ months on the run in 1967–68—possibly the single most valuable resource in the case—was never fully utilized in the FBI's official investigation. By the time William Bradford Huie published Ray's full narrative in 1970, the Bureau had "closed" its file.

Item: Not one of Jerry Ray's alibi witnesses at the Sportsman Country Club was ever interviewed by the FBI. Considering that its own original warrant for "Galt"/Ray referred to a conspiracy involving a "brother," it seems an astonishing lapse that the Bureau nonetheless never thoroughly checked out Jerry Ray's story.

Item: *New Times*' own investigation of the case makes it clear that several other obvious leads—such as Jerry Ray's whereabouts the day his brother purchased the rifle in Birmingham—were never adequately pursued by the Bureau.

Item: In his first meeting with FBI agents, Jerry Ray said that he had not seen James Earl since a 1966 prison visit. Although this was disproved by the Bureau within a few days, no action was ever taken against him for furnishing false information to the FBI—a federal offense.

In any serious probe of the King homicide, members of the FBI's Atlanta Intelligence Unit would have been suspects, not investigators

Despite Jerry Ray's attempted cover-up of his pre-assassination contacts with brother James, the Bureau soon dropped him as a "prime suspect." At least one agent, however, Memphis bureau chief Robert Jensen, remained unconvinced of his innocence. According to Memphis reporter Wayne Chastain, Jensen bumped into Jerry Ray in 1969 at Nashville State Prison, where Jerry was visiting his older brother. "If I had anything to do with it," Jensen angrily told Jerry, "you'd be in there with him."

The Bureau's puzzling reluctance to probe deeper into Jerry's 1967–68 contacts with James was an omission that the recent Justice Department report on the case sharply criticized. (At the same time, the report itself includes not a single word about J.B. Stoner or the NSRP.) Considering J. Edgar Hoover's well-known loathing for Martin Luther King, and the FBI's well-documented campaign to undermine and harass the black leader (up to and including death threats), one can only wonder if the Bureau's lackluster investigation of Jerry Ray—indeed, of the entire range of conspiracy possibilities—was a matter of ineptitude, or of intent.

One man who might have the answer is Arthur Murtagh, who recently retired in good standing from the FBI after 21 years. Murtagh was a member of the Bureau's Atlanta Intelligence Unit, supposedly a major element in the FBI's investigation into King's murder.

In any serious probe of the King homicide, members of the unit might well have been suspects, not investigators, for within the FBI, says Murtagh, the Atlanta group was widely known as the "get-King squad." Its leader considered King "a menace to our society."

Upon hearing that Dr. King had been wounded, Murtagh says, the agent in charge of the unit cried out, "I hope the son of a bitch dies." Later, when word came through that King was dead, Murtagh recalls the same agent literally jumping up and down in "exaltation." "They got Zorro [a code name for King]. . . . They got Zorro," he kept repeating. "They finally got that son of a bitch."

According to Murtagh, the subsequent investigation was glaringly deficient. "We conducted a straight criminal investigation," he says. "We never even looked for a conspiracy." Leads that might have uncovered one were disregarded—"washed out," in Murtagh's words.

Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that today, in the minds of millions of Americans, the murder of Martin Luther King remains unsolved and the official findings unsatisfactory. The House of Representatives has finally caught up with public opinion and has appointed a special Committee on Assassinations to reexamine the whole garbled case from beginning to end. If the committee can survive its own internal bloodletting, one of the first witnesses it is expected to call is Jerry Ray.

As for Jerry's imprisoned brother, the man who says he was framed, he has hired yet another attorney and seems more willing than ever before to discuss the "conspiracy" with authorities. To date, however, he has not altered his story. Robert Livingston, who served as his lawyer for six years and has spent countless hours talking with him, says that James Earl Ray's litany is unchanging.

"I've practically gotten down on my knees and begged him for information about what really happened," reports Livingston, "but all he ever says is 'Raoul, Raoul, Raoul.'" ●

HOT

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Let's say that retailer sells the clock radio to your Uncle Henry. Uncle Henry brings it home, turns it on and it doesn't work. So Uncle Henry trudges back to the store to exchange his "lousy rotten" clock radio for a new one that works ("lousy" and "rotten" are Uncle Henry's words).

Now, the defective one goes right back to the manufacturer along with all the other clock radios that didn't work. And if this major retail chain sells 40,000 clock radios with a 5% defective rate, that's 2,000 "lousy rotten" clock radios.

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Consumers are protected against ever seeing these products again because even if the manufacturer repairs them, he can't recycle them as new units. He's got to put a label on the product clearly stating that it is repaired, not new, and if Uncle Henry had his way the label would also say that the product was "lousy" and "rotten."

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Consumers Hero is now sitting with 2,000 "lousy rotten" clock radios in its warehouse.

Here comes the good part. We take that clock radio, test it, check it and repair it. Then we life test it, clean it up, replace anything that makes the unit look used, put a new label on it and presto—a $39.95 clock radio and it only cost us $3 plus maybe $7 to repair it.

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Because we are so proud of the merchandise we refurbish, we offer a longer warranty. Instead of 90 days (the original warranty), we offer a five year warranty.

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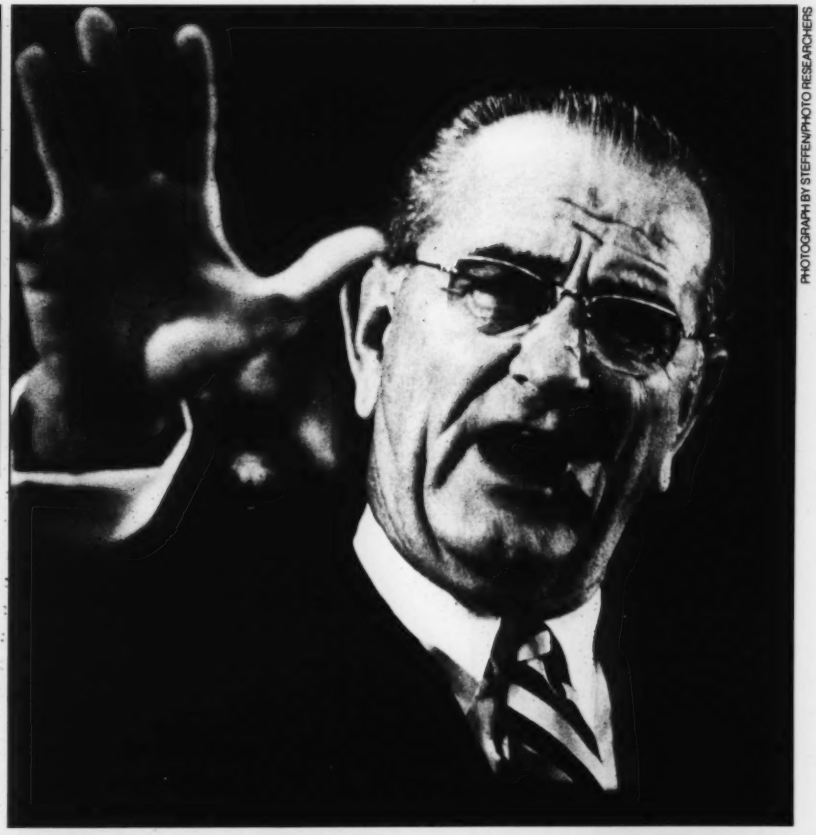
UNSUNG CLONES

People look more like people than *People* suspects. The gene pool in any breeding group gives us an enormous reservoir of characteristics. But, scientists say, such shared experiences as food, language and weather tend to reduce physical differences. Thus, Frenchmen *look* French, and Chinamen look Chinese. Moreover, psychological factors—fear, stress—reduce the gene pool still further. So, given the stressful conditions of recent times—carcinogenic Coke bottles, Watergate, the passing of Earth Shoes, *Mary Hartman*—does this mean we're only as divisible as multiplication tables? That we're all doomed to look like a thousand clones? Is that why people are always coming up these days and saying, "You look just like Julie Christie," even if you're a 14-year-old boy? And if you think *your* identity is in crisis, consider the double-featured face-mates below. Do celebrities constitute an even smaller gene pool than the rest of us? Don't sex or even age count anymore? Dig up some back issues of *People* and get to a mirror. No point spending all that money on your own nose, is there?

—John Lombardi

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHERRY SURIS/PHOTO RESEARCHERS

GOLDA MEIR



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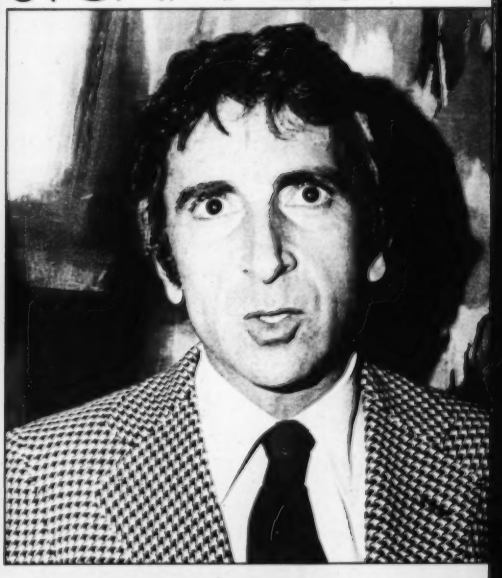

WIDE WORLD

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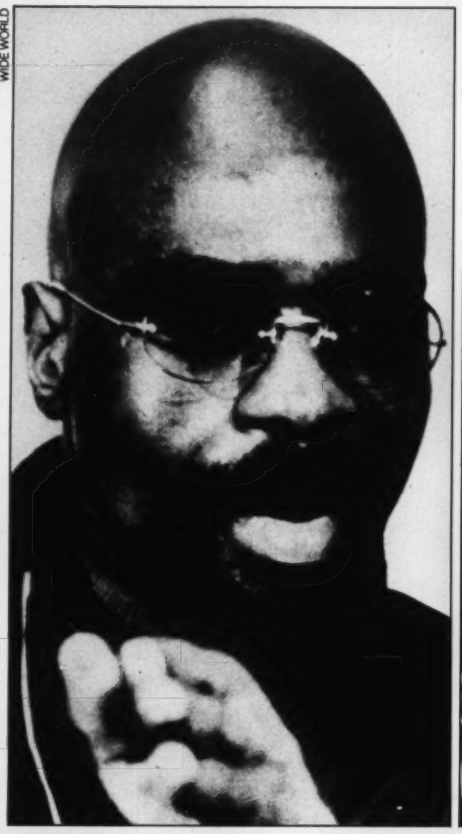

WIDE WORLD

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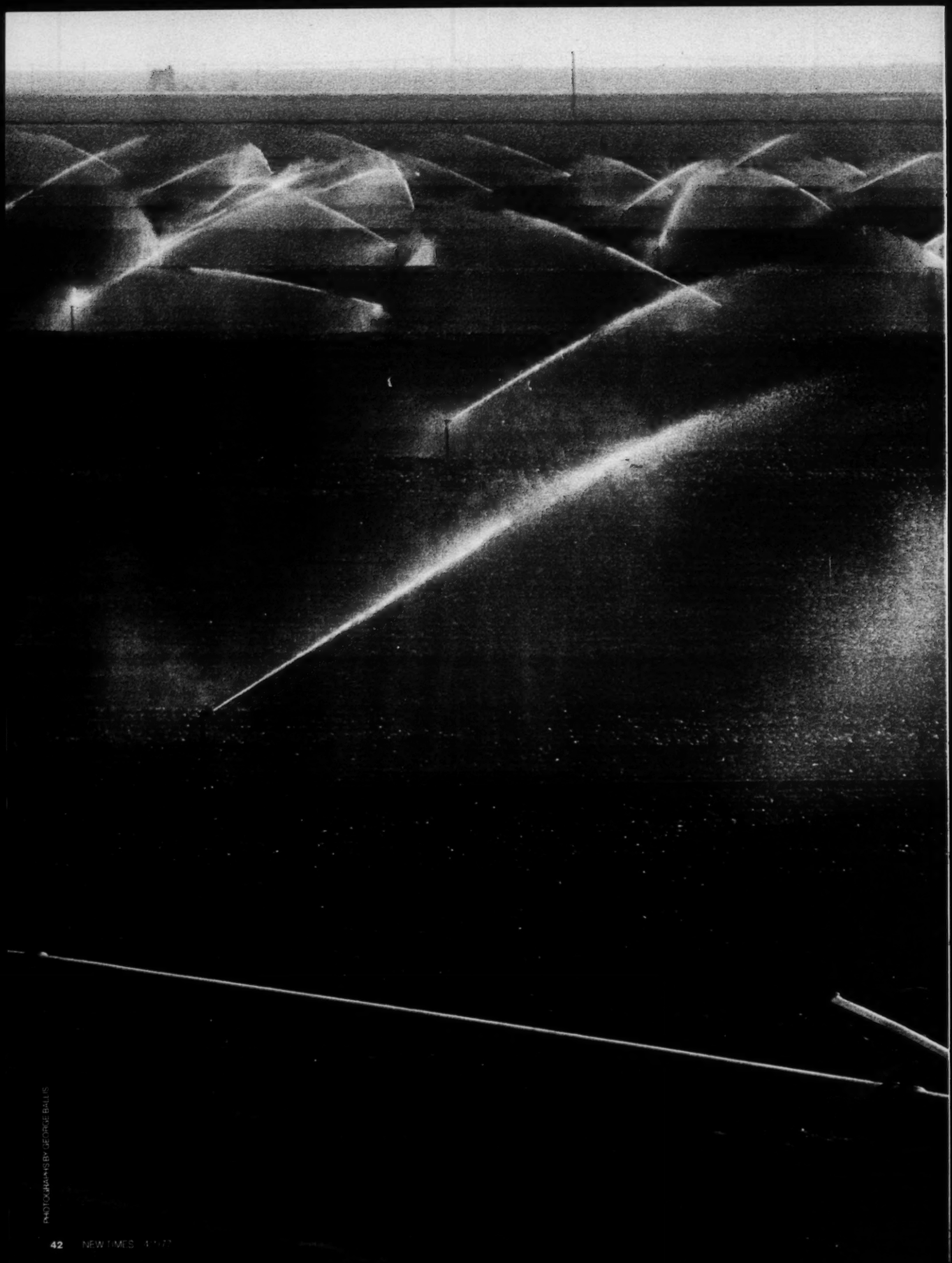

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE BALLIS

By Judith Strasser

Grapes of Wrath: 1977

Is land reform in California just another American dream?

• Fresno, California: 4 a.m., on a poor edge of town. A flashing sign washes the street with thin red neon. Ancient buses idle in a vacant lot next to the Jalisco restaurant. Men pull cars to the curb and hurry into the all-night cafe for a few brief words, a coffee-to-go. They come out, stomping their feet and warming their hands, to wait in the fog and cold.

Across the street, a busload of urban types stare from the windows of their yellow school bus. George Ballis, a wiry leprechaun of a man, stands next to the driver and grins. "This is to give you a feel for a farmworker's life," he tells his sleepy audience. "If you want a job in this valley, you see the labor contractors now. They work out of that cafe." Ballis sits down. The air brakes sigh, the bus gears grind. The driver heads out of town toward the Westlands Water District, 40 miles across the San Joaquin Valley.

George Ballis and other staff members of National Land for People (NLP) have been guiding tourists through the heart of California's great central valley every month for the past two years. NLP, a Fresno-based group with about 1,200 members nationwide, runs these "seminars in reality" to illustrate the urgent

need for land reform in the United States. The government has championed land reform programs in other countries, especially in Latin America and Southeast Asia, for many years. But to most of NLP's passengers, land reform at home seems a new and subversive idea.

The notion is not new. The basic idea dates back at least to 1776. The country's founders did not want the land to be held by a few very large and rich owners. Yet, despite the American Revolution and two centuries of strife, a few very large and rich owners still predominate. In rural counties, the top 20 landowners—less than 1 percent of the people—own 20–50 percent of the land. Tenant farmers and salaried managers work about 60 percent of all the agricultural land in Iowa and Illinois. They run farms owned by corporations and other absentee landlords. Twenty-four corporations—energy companies, timber companies and railroads—own or control mineral rights to over 122 million acres, or about 1 out of every 16 acres in the continental U.S.

Much of this concentration of ownership has occurred since World War II. But land monopoly in California built great fortunes even before the Gold Rush. Ownership patterns in the San Joaquin Valley, especially, have been traditionally bad. A bloody conflict between settlers and the valley's biggest landlord, the Southern Pacific Railroad, inspired Frank Norris' turn-of-the-century novel, *The Octopus*. During the Depression, John Steinbeck described the San Joaquin's migrant workers and landless poor in his best seller, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

But even monopoly played on a board eventually grinds to an end. No one knows, yet, who will win in the San Joaquin Valley. The present prolonged California drought could turn the rich land into a dust bowl. The conflict now centers on the Westlands Water District, an area two-thirds the size of Rhode Island stretching along the valley's west side. In Westlands, the landlords and their government friends face a growing grassroots coalition.

Congress provided the fuel for this latest reform campaign when it passed the Reclamation Act 75 years ago. The 1902 law followed a long tradition of loophole-ridden legislation designed, more or less, to help family farmers tame an uncivilized continent. Many legislators intended the Homestead Act, the Swamplands Act, the Timber and Stone Act and others to grant small plots to pioneers who would settle and farm. But in practice these laws gave the country away to corporations and speculators.

The authors of the Reclamation Act spelled out exactly whom they meant to help when they authorized Congress to build water projects designed to reclaim arid land for agricultural purposes. Reclamation project beneficiaries were to own farms of limited size: the law allows each landowner only enough subsidized water to irrigate 160 acres or less. Landowners were to be resident, rather than absentee. They were to be farmers, not speculators: the law requires owners to sell excess land (over 160 acres per family member) in 160-acre parcels, at prices which do not reflect the value added by the federal water project.

This 1902 law set the rules for all future reclamation projects. It enabled Congress, in 1959, to approve the San Luis Project, a $600 million system of reservoirs and canals to irrigate the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. The project's advocates quoted the Reclamation Act and promised that thousands of family farms would take root in the newly formed Westlands Water District. A handful of skeptics, including George Ballis, then the editor of a small labor paper, warned that the taxpayers' money would end up lining the pockets of the valley's land barons. In the late 1950s, Ballis remembers, hardly anyone cared. But now, he chuckles happily, "It's a whole different scene."

The Reclamation Act spelled out exactly whom it meant to help—beneficiaries were to own farms of limited size; they were to be residents, not absentees; they were to be farmers, not speculators

High food prices, energy crises, farm laborers' rising expectations and urban dreams of the good country life have all focused national attention back on "the country." The Westlands Water District cannot stand such close scrutiny. The San Luis Project is nearly complete; it has provided irrigation water to some land since 1968. The great westside ranches should, by now, have been broken into hundreds of smaller operations. But a two-month search in early 1976 by *San Francisco Examiner* reporters Lynn Ludlow and Will Hearst revealed only two small family farms in the whole 572,000-acre district.

No new small farms have been created since that time. Last August, U.S. District Judge Barrington Parker, impressed by NLP's documentation of the misuse of public funds, issued an injunction stopping virtually all land transactions in the Westlands Water District. Parker's decision followed on the heels of a congressional investigation that brought Senators Floyd Haskell and Gaylord Nelson to Fresno in February 1976. Governor Jerry Brown testified in person at those hearings.

The Westlands Water District is agribusinessland. Major corporations and multimillionaires own county-sized Westlands farms. Southern Pacific Transportation Company holds 106,000 acres, part of the western empire granted it in the 19th century by the federal government in return for building (and not building) railroad lines. Standard Oil of California owns 10,000 Westlands acres. J. G. Boswell III, a member of Safeway's board of directors, owns 23,000 acres here. Producers Cotton Oil Co., a subsidiary of the conglomerate Bangor Punta, owns 10,000 acres and leases 7,000 more. (Other Bangor Punta subsidiaries make Piper aircraft, Smith & Wesson guns, and MACE.)

Westlands fields stretch to a horizon unbroken by houses or barns. Machines that can till 16 rows in one pass appear as tiny dots and puffs of dust in an unending sea of dirt. Biplanes drone above the fields, swooping down to release clouds of pesticide. In the dry season—from March to November—millions of feet of pipe, mounted on wheels, spray silver arcs of water, bringing life to the land.

Less than ten inches of rain fall here every year. Uncultivated acres look more like desert than fallow fields. Sparse grasses and tumbleweed barely cover the light brown, sandy earth. Dry, it's not good for very much. But irrigation unlooses the soil's fertility. Sprinkled with taxpayers' millions, these fields bring forth abundant wealth—for the few.

Russell Giffen is among those lucky few. Giffen went broke in the 1920s on a small farm on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley, still a stronghold of family farms. Undaunted, he started to buy up the cheap desert to the west.

Judith Strasser is currently writing a book on American attitudes toward land.

The good earth: In 1959, advocates claimed the San Luis Project would allow thousands of families to have their own farms. Now, the project's almost complete, but only two small farms exist in the Westlands Water District

Knowledgeable Fresno ranchers watched and shook their heads. A man who failed on the wetter east side would never make it over there. Besides, who would want to live in such a desolate wilderness?

Giffen ignored the scoffers. He sank wells, planted cotton and dryland wheat, and kept on buying land. Like most other westside ranchers, he chose not to live where he worked. He built his "home place" on the Kings River, 70 miles east. Giffen is an old man now, and he is selling out. Fresno gossip says he'd like to spare his kin a stiff inheritance tax. His 12,000-acre river ranch went on the market for over $6 million. The 77,000 acres he amassed in the Westlands brought $32 million more. People are still fighting over the land he was called a fool for buying.

Jessie de la Cruz is one who wanted to buy some of the acreage Giffen sold. She has worked California's land since early childhood. Her migrant family followed the ripening crops each year from Mexicali north to Sacramento and beyond. They made their home in tents surrounded by mud or blowing dust—when they could find a tent. For warmth, they huddled next to a fire in an old oil drum. Jessie got about four years of education in 45 or 50 different schools.

Neither marriage nor motherhood ended her work in the fields. She and her husband, Arnold, thinned, weeded and harvested cotton for Russell Giffen for 15 years. Then Giffen mechanized his operations. Jessie and Arnold found jobs picking grapes near Fresno every summer. Each winter morning they got up at 3 a.m., packed their lunches and rode the contractors' buses 100 miles to work on flower-seed farms. Their six children often went along. "We were forced to take them out of school to work," Jessie recalls.

Cesar Chavez changed Jessie's life. "I was a housewife when I wasn't working in the fields. Cesar said women had to get out of the kitchen and stand up and fight for what they believe." In the mid-1960s, her children grown, Jessie became an organizer for the United Farm Workers union. But as she talked with other farmworkers, she realized raising wages and improving working conditions for migrant laborers were simply not enough. "My grandmother always dreamed of owning the land she worked," she says. Organizing taught Jessie that "*all* farmworkers are ready to sink their roots in one place." Around 1970, Jessie and Arnold de la Cruz decided to get farmworker families together to try to buy some land.

In 1972 the de la Cruzes and several friends went to Russell Giffen. They asked to buy 160 acres to farm cooperatively. "Mr. Giffen said sure, he'd sell, if we could put down a half million dollars." Giffen's price included the cost of heavy equipment the families couldn't use on the small plot they wanted to farm. Jessie's brown eyes flash with anger.

Though they tried, the de la Cruzes couldn't find any other acreage in Westlands they could afford. Jessie mentioned their problem to George Ballis, a friend of the farmworkers' union. From Ballis she heard for the first time about the provisions of the 1902 Reclamation Act. She learned that, by law, Russell Giffen would soon have to break up his holdings into small family farms, since he took subsidized water from the new San Luis Reservoir. But she and Ballis also knew Giffen would not sell the small plots to farmworkers unless they organized.

Jessie, Ballis and several others formed National Land for People in 1974. They began to dig up the details of illegal sales of excess land. They organized "good humor bus tours" to introduce out-of-town strangers to the "stark reality" of life in the San Joaquin Valley. They raised money to sue some landowners and the Bureau of Reclamation for breaking the 1902 law. And after long days in the fields, Jessie took to Fresno's streets to talk about land reform. "We have been working the land all our lives," she tells every farmworker she meets. "We are the true farmers. The others just own the land."

The westside landlords did not expect to provoke such a reaction when, in the mid-1950s, they asked their friends in

Congress to build them the San Luis Reservoir. Public criticism of the San Joaquin Valley ranchers had peaked during the Depression and pretty much died down. In the 1950s, the United Farm Workers had not yet revived liberals' emotions, nor raised rural laborers' hopes. And Russell Giffen and other owners had a tough problem they thought Congress could solve.

The landlords faced a water crisis: their irrigation methods were drying up the underground water supply. In some places the land surface had sunk as much as 30 feet. Ranchers complained that they couldn't afford new irrigation systems. Successful wells required expensive electric turbines to pump water up at least a thousand feet.

The landowners went to Fresno Congressman B.F. (Bernie) Sisk. Sisk repeated their tales of woe to his friends on the House Interior Committee in 1959. Unless Congress helps these farmers, Bernie Sisk said solemnly, "most of the cultivated land which is the basis of their economy will revert to desert. They will have to leave and seek livings and homes elsewhere."

Sisk proposed a project to keep a thousand landlords (virtually all of them absentee) from going broke. He reassured his fellow congressmen that the benefits of federal investment in irrigation would spread far beyond these few. He painted a glorious picture, "inevitable and historic . . . under the impact of reclamation laws." Congressional action would plant the Jeffersonian dream, agrarian democracy, in the western desert soil. Five thousand new family farms, Sisk promised, would sprout on the watered land.

Few American politicians could resist such a stirring vision. Sisk's rhetoric opened hearts and hands. Congress created the country's largest federally subsidized irrigation project to bring cheap water from northern California to Russell Giffen's fields. Today, westside landowners benefit from a subsidy worth more than a billion dollars, by conservative estimates. And right now the Westlands District sends water bills to just over 200 farms.

West of Eden: 75 years ago Congress passed a law that should have made it easy for pickers to escape 19th century serfdom—it didn't

In February 1976, Senators Floyd Haskell and Gaylord Nelson came to Fresno at NLP's urging, to check on the public's investment. They sat at a long, microphone-cluttered table in the new auditorium at Fresno City College. Witnesses faced them from across the stage. The investigation proceeded California style. Witnesses spoke directly to their friends in the audience: Chicano farmworkers and long-haired freaks, or ranchers in dress-up cowboy boots. Cheers erupted whenever someone scored a good point.

Haskell and Nelson wanted to learn whether family farms can exist in the Westlands Water District. Robert De Gravelles, a real estate salesman, testified. A dark and stocky man with a plain and open face, he lacks the flashy style of the stereotype realtor. De Gravelles thinks small farms could flourish in Westlands, given half a chance.

De Gravelles represents about 2,000 people, mostly white and middle class, who want to buy Westlands farms. His clients do not include poor farmworker families or NLP, the organization that speaks for them. But they recognize him as an ally; his Fresno testimony won their warm applause. There should, after all, be enough land in Westlands for De Gravelles' clients and NLP members too.

The realtor told the senators that he did not have to advertise to attract his large clientele. He learned about Westlands in the mid-1960s, and helped a cou-

ple buy some acreage there. Later, when he heard that Russell Giffen had some property up for sale, De Gravelles asked his clients if they knew anyone else who wanted to buy westside land. They did, and, De Gravelles said, "it just spread by word of mouth" that the broker would help people who wanted small Westlands farms. People from Wisconsin, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Oregon and Washington have all found their way to De Gravelles. But most of Giffen's property went, in large chunks, to other people's clients. "I was told that the only way to get land [from the big landlords] was to buy all of it," De Gravelles testified.

On behalf of his clients, De Gravelles offered to buy land from Southern Pacific at more than $600 an acre—a generous price, considering the provisions against speculation in the Reclamation Act. SP rejected these offers out of hand, De Gravelles told the senators. The price was not high enough.

SP public relations manager Henry Ortiz charges that greed inspired the offers; that greed inspires Robert De Gravelles' interest in land reform. Ortiz says, "The brokerage fees would make De Gravelles a millionaire overnight."

Jessie followed the crops from Mexicali north to Sacramento. She made her home in tents. For warmth, she huddled at a fire in an old oil drum. She got four years of schooling in 45 different schools

The realtor admits he would profit from the sales. SP's repeated attacks on his motives concern him so much, he says, that he has asked his clients if he should back down. "They all said, 'Listen, *we're* the ones paying you. Don't let Southern Pacific shoot you off the saddle.'"

De Gravelles asked Haskell and Nelson to make good Bernie Sisk's promise of land for small family farmers. "We plan that the Westlands Irrigation District will consist of the Michaelena farm, and the Ward farm, as well as the Norman farm, and the Swartz, and the De Gravelles, and the Vaughan farms, along with hundreds of other family farms," Robert De Gravelles told the senators and an audience hushed by the emotion in his voice. "We dream of farmers working their own property, buying their own tractors and sending their children to their schools at Cantua Creek, Three Rocks, Huron and Five Points. We want merchants in LeMoore and Helm and Tranquility welcoming these farm families and the agricultural business people who serve them. We dream of 4-H clubs, high school marching bands and local churches."

The vision tugs the strings of patriotic hearts. But other witnesses insisted that Westlands already has its family farms. "My family has been in farming for as many generations as anyone can remember," said John Harris, a young man with a movie cowboy's looks. "I live on our ranch in the same house I grew up in as a child."

Harris' grandfather, like Russell Giffen, developed westside wells in the 1920s so that he could grow cotton. Good luck and the hard work of three generations turned the desolate homestead into headquarters for a large and prosperous ranch. Over the decades, the Harrises won the respect and friendship of Westlands' biggest landlords. The representatives of Southern Pacific, Standard Oil, J.G. Boswell Co. and Bangor Punta sat quiet through the congressional hearings at which Harris testified. Just as ITT likes to hear small businessmen praise free-market competition, so Westlands' barons enjoyed hearing this young man speak about family farms. The Harrises, unlike these corporate giants, come close to meeting the Reclamation Act's requirements for subsidized water users. They work their own land and live on it, as the 1902 law demands.

But although Harris sounds like a family farmer, he speaks for monopoly. His family owns and irrigates several thousand acres more than the Reclamation Act permits. Their ranch fronts on Interstate 5, a monotonous road that cuts straight through the San Joaquin Valley's west side. Steel towers raise curving high-tension lines beside the Interstate. The California Water Project's concrete canal parallels freeway and power lines across endless acres of watered fields and untilled sage and dust. The view puts I-5 drivers to sleep, but Harris' family and friends find subtle beauty in the scene. Transportation, power, water: the taxpayer-financed infrastructure gilds the green and brown of their barely developed land.

Harris' cattle reek for miles before you actually see them along the Interstate: 60,000 head penned in the dirt, cow piss and dung of one of the largest feedlots in the world. Harris Farms grows its feed on 15,800 acres. The family owns nearly 4,000 acres and leases the

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rest from other landlords, chiefly Southern Pacific. The Harris operations include slaughterhouses near Fresno and San Francisco and a cotton gin company in Coalinga.

Like most of the other big Westlands owners, the Harrises have agreed to sell their excess land within ten years—after San Luis water fills their irrigation ditches. The Reclamation Act is indeed enforced, John Harris said in Fresno. He complained to Haskell and Nelson that compliance with the law requires "great personal sacrifice."

Harris and the big corporations insist the law is working, but they say it's archaic as well as unfair. "The concept of the family farm is based on a 1902 philosophy," Ralph Brody testified. Brody, chief counsel and manager of the Westlands Water District, earns over $80,000 a year—more than any other state official, including the governor. Brody is hired and paid by the irrigation district's board of directors, the representatives of the owners of the largest amounts of land. (In many water districts, voting power is proportional to the number of acres a landowner holds. Southern Pacific, for example, controls 20 percent of the Westlands votes.)

Despite the big landowners' repeated attacks on the Reclamation Act, the law has worked for them ever since it was passed. Their friends in Congress have used the provisions favoring small farmers to justify outrageously expensive water projects like the San Luis Dam and Reservoir. Once the projects have been built, federal bureaucrats have directed the subsidized water to the big landowners' crops.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation administers the Reclamation Act. Its employees are supposed to judge every sale of excess land against the standards set by the 1902 law. Last August, Judge Barrington Parker—studying evidence submitted by NLP and by the General Accounting Office—found such irregularities in the Bureau's practices that he ordered future sales of excess land suspended until the rules are publicly debated and revised. His injunction has withstood several legal appeals.

NLP has documented nearly 50 Bureau-approved sales in Westlands that violate the law: sales to absentee buyers, sales of huge parcels only nominally broken up to meet the 160-acre limit, and sales at prices considerably higher than unwatered land would fetch. Recently, NLP has found, the Bureau has called its approval of some illegal sales merely "tentative." Presumably, this will permit Bureau officials to escape when the heat comes down. But the land transfers go on whether the approval is final or tentative. After the transfers, the Westlands ranchers still control their thousands of excess acres.

After the congressional hearings, in a dark Fresno bar, a young commodity broker explained how the system works. "The excess owners go first to the people they know and trust—to their lawyer, their broker." The broker, whose Westlands clients include John Harris, spoke from experience. "They get real close with those people; their business relies on them. They want to do them favors. Like one of my clients told me, 'Your broker has to be the sort of person you'd want to join in bed!' "

The broker, who wishes to remain anonymous, works hard for his luxuries. His Westlands clients have been urging him to buy some of their excess land.

It is a hard favor to turn down. The land will be sold for less than its present value, although not as low as the Reclamation Law demands. It would be a sound investment with very little risk. The broker believes the great estates should be divided up; that the benefits of land ownership should spread. But he's the kind of person whose conscience needles him because he fudges his income tax. "To be honest, I don't feel I have a right to own 480 acres here."

"Every Mexican-American has the potential of becoming a Chicano once he swallows the bitter pill of reality." These words decorate the skeleton of a bus at Rancho Bracero, the farmworkers' farm

Many similar sales have taken place with little consequence. In June 1975, a federal grand jury did indict Fresno developer John Bonadelle, three accomplices and Bonadelle's company, Land Dynamics, for turning a fast buck on some of Russell Giffen's excess land. Bonadelle allegedly paid twelve friends and relatives $1,000 each to buy more than 1,750 acres. Eleven days after the sales were complete, Bonadelle resold the land to another absentee landlord. He made $229,000 on the tidy but fraudulent scheme.

The federal prosecutor pursued only one of the indictment's 22 counts: conspiracy to defraud the government. The other charges were dropped because the Bureau of Reclamation land sale forms did not meet certain legal requirements. (George Ballis snorts, "You'd think in 70 years they could come up with proper forms.") On February 24, 1977, after hours of bargaining, Bonadelle copped a plea. He pled Land Dynamics guilty to one charge of conspiracy. The judge fined the company $10,000, and dismissed the indictment. Bonadelle and friends went free.

But Bonadelle is still an angry man. In an interview with the *Fresno Guide* after the indictment was dismissed, the developer charged the Bureau of Reclamation with applying a "double standard" in the Westlands Water District. He said the Bureau "gave us the green light" on the transaction before it actually occurred. "Even today," he charged, "the Bureau is allowing similar land transactions affecting thousands and thousands of acres of land. . . ."

George Ballis believes the Bureau of Reclamation and other Westlands owners made John Bonadelle a scapegoat. National Land for People has asked the grand jury to investigate the developer's claims that the law has been selectively enforced.

The transaction for which Bonadelle pled his company guilty resembles, among others, the sale of two sections (1,280 acres) that John Harris farms. Harris used to lease this land from Adolph and Mary Domingenes, excess owners themselves. After their deaths he rented from their estate. The Domingenes willed the land, in equal, undivided interest, to the Catholic Foreign Mission Society and to Santa Clara College, a Catholic school. Both charities sold their land to an Arizona family shortly after settlement of the estate. But the land did not pass out of Harris' control. Both deeds requested that tax statements be sent in care of Harris Farms.

Eight months later, the Arizonans sold the land to a syndicate of four couples living in the suburbs of San Francisco. John Harris' lawyer arranged crop financing for the syndicate with Harris' cotton-ginning firm. Several of the syndicators "sold" their parcels again—to investment companies in the Netherlands Antilles, tiny tax haven islands in the Caribbean. Harris still counts those two sections in his enormous ranch. Bernie Sisk's vision of family farms hangs over Westlands, a shimmering mirage.

"Every Mexican-American has the potential of becoming a Chicano, once he swallows the bitter pill of reality." These words decorate the skeleton

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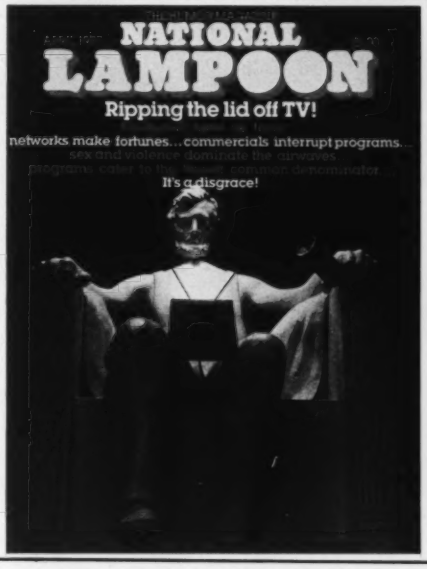

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of a white school bus, abandoned beside a tomato field. The bus, the hulk of a junked truck-trailer and a few tarps strung between offer the only refuge from the relentless valley sun. This place is called Rancho Bracero, or the farmworkers' farm.

In 1973, after Russell Giffen refused to sell them land, Jessie and Arnold de la Cruz and five other families rented six acres near Fresno. They planted cherry tomatoes. For the first time in their lives they worked for themselves. That year the tomatoes brought in enough money to pay the families good wages and produce a cash profit. Four of the families used their share of the profits for a down payment on Rancho Bracero, 40 dusty acres just outside the Westlands Water District.

Again they planted tomatoes and other row crops. Their financial success in 1974 convinced dozens of other farmworker families to rent land for small co-op farms. Westside Planning Agency, a community group funded by grants from the federal government and foundations, helped the families find financing and land, and arranged classes in marketing and farm management.

But the de la Cruzes and their friends have not done so well in the last two years. Rancho Bracero (like most of the co-ops) relies on a well for irrigation water, and the pump went out in the middle of the summer of 1975. The co-op lost part of its crop that year. It is still paying off the thousands of dollars it cost to have the pump replaced. The pump failure, Jessie de la Cruz says, shows why the co-ops need farms in Westlands, on land that draws its lifeblood from the San Luis Reservoir. "We have sunk our roots deep here," Jessie scoffs at Rancho Bracero's sandy loam. "But not so deep we won't move to Westlands if we can."

Sometimes it seems to Jessie that the move may be drawing near. NLP has won some real victories: Jerry Brown has committed his administration to creating small farms in the water district, Senators Haskell and Nelson are preparing legislation to reinforce the Reclamation Act, and federal courts have handed down five decisions that favor NLP's position in the past six months. But whether the state government, Congress or the courts will override the big landlords' power remains to be seen.

Brown and his administration, at least, have demonstrated that they have the will. Completion of the San Luis Project requires the signing of a Water Services Contract between Westlands Water District and the Bureau of Reclamation, covering such technical points as the nature of the connection between the ground water systems (wells) and the federally controlled surface delivery system. The contract must also be approved by California Treasurer Jesse Unruh. State officials want to withhold approval of the Water Services Contract until the Bureau of Reclamation accepts a second document: the Cooperative Agreement between the Bureau and the State of California.

The proposed Cooperative Agreement is unprecedented in the history of federal reclamation projects. It would involve state agencies in the approval of excess land sales, and it clearly spells out the criteria for approval. An individual owner could receive enough water for only 160 acres. Owners would have to live on the land, or in one of the small towns within 15 miles of the water district. Landowners would have to be "actively and personally engaged in farming the land."

The Haskell-Nelson bill is pretty good, Ballis says, but adds there is already adequate authority. Our members are always reminding us: "That court decision was wonderful—but where is the dirt?"

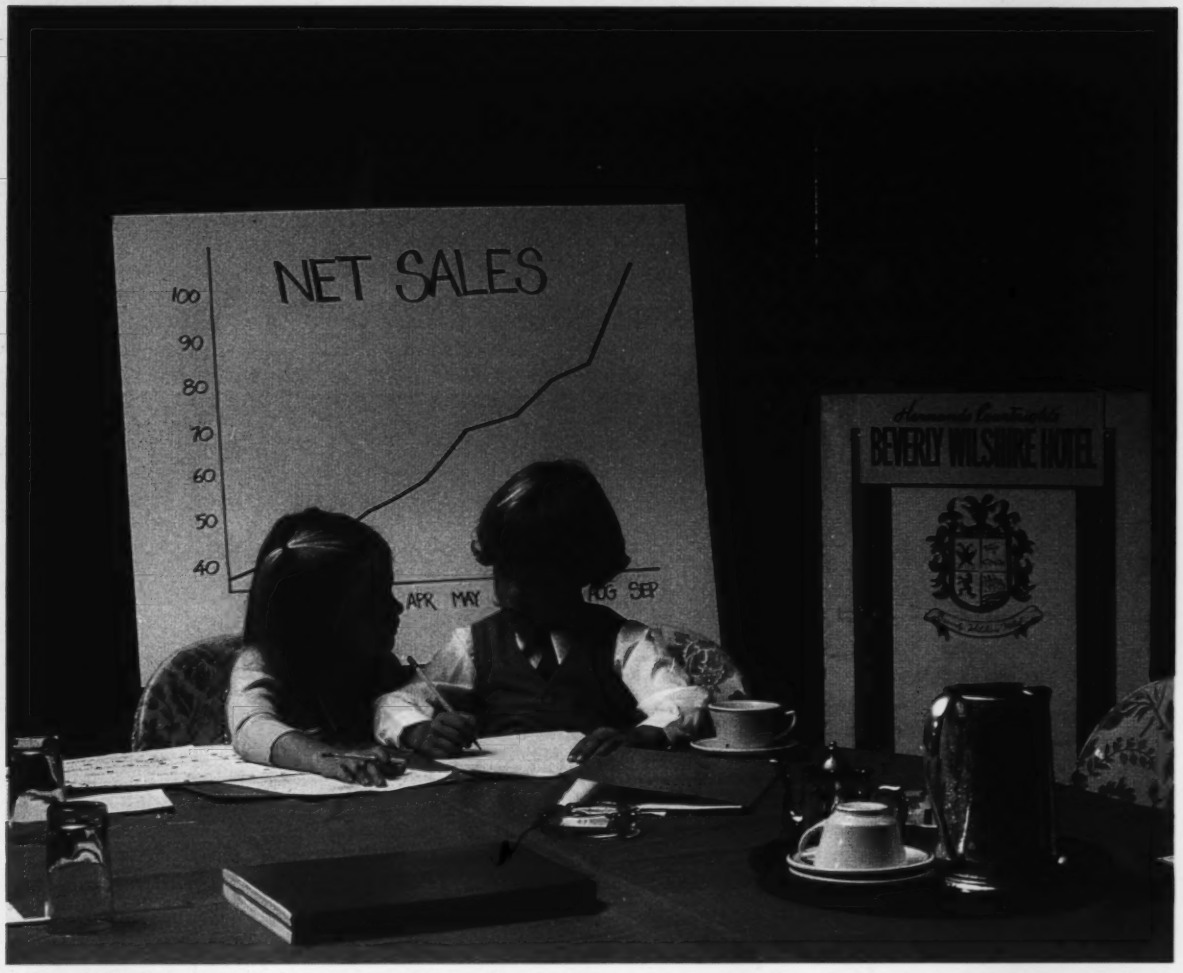
The agreement has already met considerable resistance. Predictably, California Westside Farmers, an organization of Westlands ranchers and property owners, vehemently opposes the proposal. Some of its provisions, CWF maintains, "appear to be flagrant violations of the rights of private property owners and the Constitution." The Bureau of Reclamation, which has never rushed to show its concern for the small farmers' welfare, initially resisted cooperating with the state of California at all. The Bureau claimed that its authority to make cooperative agreements with states applied only to public lands. (Westlands, of course, is all private property.) But Brown's legal advisers apparently convinced the Bureau's lawyers that the authority does exist. Last fall Bureau of Reclamation and California officials met once, for two hours, to discuss the proposed agreement. A second scheduled meeting was canceled after lame-duck Secretary of the Interior Thomas Kleppe announced that he had decided not to make any decisions concerning Westlands before leaving office in January.

And there the matter stands. Cecil Andrus, the new Secretary of the Interior, promised at his confirmation hearings to look into the Westlands problem. As of early March, however, President Carter's nominees for commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, assistant secretary for Land and Water, and solicitor in the Department of the Interior had not received Senate confirmation. The people who fill these positions will supervise the review of Westlands policies. It remains to be seen whether they have the political will required to put small farmers on the land.

Senators Haskell and Nelson are now circulating a proposed "Reclamation Lands Family Farm Act," which they plan to introduce this spring. The current draft reportedly reiterates Congress' intention that family farmers benefit from reclamation projects, fixes the permitted size of holdings from 160 per person, based on a four-member family, to a limit of 640 acres for any number, and strengthens the residency requirements. The bill also provides for federal purchase of excess acreage for which no qualified buyer can be found. The government would then lease the land in small parcels to people who lack money to buy their own farms.

The Haskell-Nelson bill has far-reaching implications. It applies to 1.2 million acres of undivided excess land administered by the Bureau of Reclamation in 17 western states. But how much impact it will have in Westlands is a matter of some dispute. "Legislation clarifying or reinforcing the [1902] law would be in order," says Bill Press, director of California's Office of Planning and Research. Press, along with Brown aide Tony Kline, has been instrumental in drafting the proposed Cooperative Agreement. But neither Press nor George Ballis believes further legislation is really necessary to open Westlands to small-scale farms.

"It's a pretty good bill," Ballis says. But, he adds, there is already "adequate authority" in the Reclamation Act. "The key is the administration. If we get the likes of Harold Ickes in the Interior Department, maybe something will happen. If we don't, nothing's gonna happen, no matter what the hell you pass. We've made a lot more progress than we've ever made," he says. "But our members remind us we don't have the land for them. They say, 'That court decision was wonderful—but where is the dirt?' " ●



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Pianist Keith Jarrett believes in improvisation without qualification

MR. EPIPHANY

By Frank Conroy

The place is a large city in Europe, Japan or the United States. The scene is a concert hall. Thousands of people pour into the building and take their seats. The house lights go down. On stage, a Steinway grand piano, with its bench. A young man, rather short, with a compact, powerful body, emerges from the wings. His face is sharp and intelligent. Applause rises, and cuts off abruptly as he sits down at the piano.

Thus far, a familiar scene. A piano recital, beginning as piano recitals have always begun. But there is a difference, a fundamental difference of great significance. The young man does not know what he is going to play. He knows what he is *not* going to play—not Chopin, not Bach, Mozart or Bartok, nor any of the others he might very well play in another sort of concert, not the music of Ellington, Strayhorn, Monk or the jazz writers he particularly likes, nor even any of his own written music. As he raises his hands to the keyboard, his mind, musically speaking, is a blank. He has been concentrating for the last half hour on keeping it blank—free of any little scraps of melody, empty of any associations, void of any premature structural or thematic ideas. He goes so far as to attempt to wipe out any intellectual memory of ever having played the piano before, for he is determined, once he starts, to avoid repeating anything he might have played in the past in similar circumstances. Indeed, his preparation is the exact obverse of that of all the other young men elsewhere in the world who might, at that same moment, be sitting down in other concert halls to play for other audiences. He wants to be empty. What does he play, then? The only relevant answer is that he plays music. Totally improvised music.

His hands come down, his fingers strike the keys, and there is a sound. The sound seems to have a direction and he follows that direction. He listens. The sound becomes more complex and his hands begin to roam, opening more music from the strings of the piano. He is improvising, but not, as we are most familiar with that art, on a given theme. He simultaneously improvises theme, variation, development and structure. It is all improvised, made on the spot, from instant to instant. There would appear to be no other player in the world, from any musical background, who does what he does on the concert stage. His name is Keith Jarrett.

Jarrett began life in modest circumstances. A large family in Allentown, Pennsylvania. His father worked in real estate, and money was scarce, but Keith and his four brothers had enough fun growing up so as not to notice. Keith began playing piano in 1948 at the age of three. His mother encouraged him, and somehow teachers were found. There were no other musicians in the family as far back as anyone could remember, but the boy unquestionably was a prodigy. By his early teens, he was playing the classical literature in concerts and recitals.

The psychological pressures of early exposure to large audiences has warped many a promising artist, but Jarrett was quite strong, even as a child, and through those years one imagines him growing more and more confident as a performer. (He would occasionally include his own music in the program—sketches or small pieces.) At home there was the hard work of practice, but also the pleasure of going deeper and deeper into music itself. Jarrett has loved music—and loved playing—from the start. The worst threat his mother could make, if she saw him let up at practice, was to sell the piano. He would sight read omniverously, playing every composer he came across; by the age of 10 or 11, his technique had developed to the point where he began to feel a certain freedom on the keyboard. In order to improvise as successfully as he later would, he first had to be able to play in all keys easily, modulate effortlessly, and not have to worry overmuch about his hands, fingering, runs, and so on. He achieved these not inconsiderable feats at a very young age, in part by refusing to narrow his approach to the piano (becoming a Chopin specialist, or the like) and by moving ahead broadly, playing every sort of music.

"I think of my musical evolution from the very beginning as being completely straightforward," Jarrett said recently. "I have moved into various categories when each of those categories seemed to be the closest thing to the music within me." At 15, he began to play jazz; its creative possibilities intrigued him. One could improvise in jazz, and Jarrett was drawn to it, even though, at

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES JOERN

first, it was improvisation over a given structure. He had composed music in one form or another all his life, but the spontaneous, instantaneous nature of modern jazz seemed to represent a special kind of challenge and excitement. He went to the Berklee School in Boston because of its special attention to jazz, and supported himself playing commercial cocktail music in local bars and hotels. He met jazz musicians, and played with them, and began to build a local reputation as a particularly good player. After a year at Berklee, however, he did not reregister. He felt the school could not teach what he wanted to learn—to improvise creatively. "It's not a particularly creative place," he says now. "It's a trade school, really."

At critical points in his life, Jarrett seems to have made decisions by looking into himself, almost as if he were improvising his life as well as his music. At 17, an extraordinary honor came his way—the chance to study privately in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, all expenses paid; yet he turned it down. Boulanger is one of the most famous and most admired teachers of composition in the world, and to have been her student would have opened all sorts of musical, professional and academic doors. However, Jarrett was not swayed by the practical considerations—he had already chosen another path. He explains, "I always had a feeling of something quite special ahead of myself." If he didn't know precisely where his growth would lead him, he sensed the direction, at least, and made his choices accordingly.

Given his particular interests, he could hardly have picked a better time to get into jazz. For quite a while most jazz music had been a fairly direct extension of be-bop. If a quartet of young players got together in the early sixties to play, chances are something like the following would happen: First they would choose a particular tune, to which everyone knew the chord changes. Those harmonies would be pretty much set, and would indicate the outlines of the figured bass line, the chords for the piano and the scales for improvisation. The drummer would play time—that is to say, the basic meter would remain the same—and improvised melodic lines would overlie the whole structure. Be-bop resembles the contrapuntal music of the eighteenth century more than anything else, and the forms are fairly rigid.

In an attempt to break out of that rigidity, a number of particularly talented players in the sixties began to experiment with new ways of making jazz. Improvisation based on altered scales, or modes, sometimes at several removes from the underlying harmony, was an early breakaway. Normal structures were interrupted for long sequences of free playing. Meter was no longer quite so strict. Changes no longer had to be stated so explicitly as before—there were other ways of playing together and knowing where you were in a given tune.

It was a time of enthusiasm for the new. Ornette Coleman. Cecil Taylor. As a result, Jarrett very rapidly attracted the attention of a small, highly sophisticated audience. He went through various phases, including what he calls a "linear period," when he rarely played even the simplest chords, but concentrated on blindingly fast lines, and his audience understood. When he moved on, they understood that, too.

The major vehicle for his jazz work was a group composed of himself, the modern bassist Charlie Haden and Paul Motian, who had played drums with Bill Evans, one of the great masters of the post-bop era. Working with his own tunes, and his own forms, Jarrett explored improvisation, group improvisation, straight-ahead playing, free playing, sound effects, exotic rhythms and every sort of jazz, with the possible exception of ballads, in which he seems not to be particularly interested. The emphasis was on the act of playing, rather than the presentation of material. His passionate improvisations and his sensational technique began to attract attention. The group, to which eventually Dewey Redman was added on saxophone, electrified audiences in both the U.S. and Europe, even audiences unfamiliar with avant-garde jazz, through the sheer force and energy of the music. Jarrett played with them, on and off, for more than ten years.

His mind, musically speaking, is a blank as he raises his hands. It is free of any little scraps of melody . . . he plays totally improvised music

He also worked as a sideman with Charles Lloyd, the saxophonist, and for more than a year with Miles Davis—a post that in certain circles means you have definitely arrived. Jarrett's rise was not particularly swift, but it was steady, and his musical growth was tangible. (A comparison of *Gary Burton/Keith Jarrett*, Atlantic, 1971, with *Keith Jarrett/Shades*, Impulse, 1976, shows how much he improved in five years.) By the early 1970s, he was a highly respected jazz player.

But he did not stop there. Jarrett began a series of solo piano recitals in Europe, playing, at first, his own tunes, then including long sections of two-handed improvisation. There were at least two reasons for the standing-room-only audiences his concerts soon were attracting. First, the music, which existed somewhere between jazz and (for want of a better term) serious music, drew devotees of both. Secondly, Jarrett is a performer of almost hypnotic power. Whatever else it is, a piano recital is a theatrical event, and European audiences have always been particularly responsive to that aspect of concerts. The elegant, romantic figure of Franz Lizst once held the entire continent in thrall. Lizst would remove his white gloves, finger by finger, as he stood on stage before a concert, and fling them to the wives and daughters of the bourgeoisie gathered under the footlights like so many groupies. Jarrett is much too serious to enjoy that sort of foolishness, but he is a very dramatic player nonetheless—singing as he plays, or rising from the bench to stab at the keys for a certain tone, or suddenly giving voice to a great whooping shout as he discovers something. His physical involvement in the act of playing is unabashed, and completely sincere—he would seem, at times, to be a dancer at the keyboard.

Gradually Jarrett dropped even the framework of his tunes as the basis for his concert work. He began to do pure improvisation, or something very close to it.

Strictly speaking, pure improvisation is an impossibility. There are always certain keys that seem more like home than others (Jarrett has a fondness for the key of G, for instance) and always certain habits and mannerisms (he likes a four-note gliss of half tones, for example, F,F#,G,G#) and certain unconscious repetitions. Bad improvisers simply string discrete chunks of material together in different series, rearranging the order, but an ambitious player will try to free himself of his favorite licks and become purer. In this regard, Jarrett makes very great demands on himself. He is able to improvise the way he does only because he has been playing the piano for so long, and such diverse music, that his hands can almost automatically sculpt out of the keyboard something very close to what he hears in his inner ear. His hands, in a certain sense, contain *in themselves* the laws of harmony,

cycles and mathematical relationships that make up Western music, without his brain being immediately involved. There is a special kind of biofeedback, a brain-hand loop involved when Jarrett plays, and the signals are complicated.

The European connection led to Manfred Eicher, the German producer and president of ECM. Jarrett's professional association and friendship with Eicher has had a profound effect on the course of his career. Not only was Eicher willing and eager to record the concert work, and pay splendid royalties on the sales of the albums, but he also brought special technical skills to bear in making the records themselves. For the first time in his life, Jarrett was being recorded by people as dedicated as himself. When he found out Jarrett had written music for strings and piano, Eicher advanced large sums of money to hire the musicians to play it, and eventually to record it. A courageous and significant decision, because, as it turned out, Jarrett's string music was better than anyone had any reason to anticipate.

Elegant eclecticism: Bad improvisers string chunks of material together in different series; Jarrett frees himself of his favorite licks, becomes purer

(I should interrupt here to explain that when I first saw Jarrett perform in Carnegie Hall, with a large string section, playing a rather long piece of his own composition, I was so impressed by the clean, beautifully balanced, subtly voiced string writing that I confess I didn't think he had done it. I thought he'd written out some themes and given it to a specialist. I could not have been more wrong.)

Jarrett had no training in orchestration, and very little experience in hearing his written music actually played by anybody, and yet his natural talent, his musicality, his taste and, above all, his ear prevailed. "If I can hear it," he was to tell me, "it ought to work when I write it out." Given the almost ideal arrangement with Eicher, Jarrett has, in the past year, disbanded his group and moved away from jazz toward solo concerts and the writing of modern music. That is his path.

At this moment Jarrett occupies interesting territory. The energies of jazz and rock infuse his improvisations without limiting the forms he chooses to explore. His ensemble writing will undoubtedly become more ambitious as he gets the chance to hear it all actually played. Most serious music in this country is written by academics, or by academically trained composers who focus on certain prestigious competitions, and, perforce, on the tastes and prejudices of the judges. It is, sad to say, often a nasty atmosphere, full of snobbism and contempt for the general audience, and it is no surprise that most of the music is thin stuff. Jarrett is free of all that nonsense. Whatever one thinks of his music, it comes from his heart. Classical music critics can, in confusion, call him naive, whatever that means, and jazz critics can call him cerebral, which is dead wrong, but the indications are that if anyone is going to write important music in America in the next 20 or 30 years it will be a nonacademic—someone very much like Keith Jarrett.

It isn't easy to see Jarrett. He is a private man, and he deals with the media reluctantly. It took five months to get his phone number. When I finally reached him, he spoke rapidly and to the point: I should send him some of my work, and call back in a week. I mailed a short piece on Monk, an article on the Rolling Stones and a book I wrote about my childhood. During the second phone call I assured him that I did not use a notebook or a tape recorder. I wanted rather to meet him and spend some time with him, and see what happened. He agreed to see me, but would not commit himself to any specific period of time.

Eventually I arrived at a very small town in central New Jersey. Following instructions, I called Keith from the phone booth in front of the general store. "I can only give you a couple of hours," he said. "I'll come get you."

He arrived in a four-wheel-drive Ford Bronco, and looked at my rented car. "Does it have snow tires?" It did not, and so we went in his van. The last few hundred yards were along a narrow, snow-packed track through the woods. Jarrett's home, a refurbished farmhouse, sits on a steep incline, isolated from the outside world.

Inside, I met his wife, Margot, and his three-year-old son, Gabriel. We all sat on the floor in the living room and tried to assemble the various tubes of a new vacuum cleaner, without success. Margot and the boy disappeared into another part of the house. Once again, I was struck by the aura of energy that surrounds Jarrett. He spoke calmly, and with few unnecessary words, and yet there was a feeling of electric tension. I asked how he had come to live there.

"The city became impossible," he said. "When Margot and I first got there we lived in the middle of Spanish Harlem. It was all we could afford, and it was a nightmare. I felt no connection to any of it." He stared at the floor. "We were kids, then. We didn't know anything. Then we lived in Greenwich Village in an apartment we couldn't afford, and that didn't work either. So we started looking around in the country, and found this. A Guggenheim helped with the money part."

I asked him if he went to the city often—a drive of an hour and a half.

"Not much." (Later, Margot was to tell me, it felt as if they had spent more time in Europe than in New York.)

We talked in a general way about music, and I got the feeling Jarrett listens more to music of the past than that of his own time. He became most animated talking about Handel, for instance. "Handel is underrated," he said firmly. "Listen to Handel side by side with Bach sometime. They compliment one another. There's a clarity in Handel's music—a clarity." Jarrett does not vaccilate—when he has an opinion he expresses it forcefully, so much so, in fact, that he sometimes sounds a bit defensive. At the very least, one notices in

him the young man's (he is 32 now) tendency to have a firm position on almost every subject. His quickness of mind, and the clean, focused language with which he expresses himself, without a trace of jargon, redeem him. Also, he doesn't push. His opinions are his own, and he does not proselytize.

"Stay for dinner," he said after a couple of hours. "There's plenty of food."

I accepted. Gabriel brought up drinks from the kitchen.

"What are we eating?" Jarrett asked the boy.

"Lamb leg," Gabe said. At the age of three, Gabriel is remarkably self-possessed. An only child, he knows how to get along with adults. Throughout my visit—which turned out to be two days—he remained cheerful, even-tempered, affectionate and busy. He addresses his parents by their first names.

In response to some gentle prodding from me, Jarrett rapidly described the outlines of his career, but it was clear that he wasn't much interested in pursuing his own history. He becomes slightly impatient when talking about the past, as if dwelling on it will distract attention from the present.

The question of strength came up—personal strength. Jarrett seems to have always remained true to his inner vision. Over a period of many years, he has not compromised. I told him I was curious about the source of that strength, and I asked him if he was a religious man. The question caught him off guard; he didn't answer immediately.

"A lot of young players seem to be into something," I said.

Jarrett got up and went into the kitchen; he needed to collect his thoughts, or so it seemed to me.

When he returned he said, "Some of them are trying to identify with their audience, with the different fads, and some of them are just gullible. The trouble is, it's hard to talk about these things seriously now, because the coin has been debased. I can tell you that I'm on a path—Margot and I have been on a path for the last 12 years, and what started it off was a book I read, but I'd rather not get into it."

I asked if he had had a guide, or a teacher.

"No. I did it myself, with books. It changed my life, and that was long before people started getting involved with this sort of thing. I got in the habit of not talking about it, because people would have thought I was crazy, in those days." He paused. "There's no point, anyway. It's not about talking, it's about being."

I asked him what the book was.

"Never mind," he said. "It was just a book. Another culture, another time—but the things he said made sense."

Dinner at the Jarretts was somewhat more formal than one might expect of a young American couple. Served in the dining room, with place settings and candles. Lamb, an eggplant casserole and a very good bottle of wine. Keith obviously enjoys eating—he had second helpings of everything. Margot is an alert woman, with an air of competence and, at the same time, a slightly abstracted nervousness. She is pretty, bright and perhaps a bit more fun-loving than her husband, but she contains herself in deference to him. They met in Allentown, when they were young, and they have the closeness of people who have grown up together.

The talk veered to the subject of Miles Davis, with whom Jarrett had a good relationship. Suddenly, from the end of the table, young Gabriel piped up. "Is this still the interview?" he asked. The boy was used to more attention at the table. His tone made it clear that he didn't resent the lack of it, he just want-

Record improvisations

Jarrett really doesn't fit into any category, and hence a lot of people have never heard of him. Nevertheless, his solo improvisations have won him fans all over the world, passionate fans who buy his records and spread the word. *Solo Concerts*, a three-record set, sold 75,000 in the U.S. and more than 50,000 in Europe and Japan. The two-record album of the Köln concert has sold more than 100,000 in the U.S. alone, and still sells about 1,500 a week, one-and-a-half years after its release. These are amazing figures for any noncommercial music, let alone music as demanding as Jarrett's.

The critical response has been generous as well: In 1975, Jarrett was voted top composer and pianist in *Downbeat*'s International Critics poll. *Stereo Review*'s Chris Albertson called *Solo Concerts* "the finest new album of jazz piano I have heard in 20 years." It was voted best pop album of the year in *Time* magazine and the *New York Times*, best record in *Downbeat* and *Jazz Forum*. *Köln Concert* was similarly honored.

The following list includes some of the albums on which Jarrett appears.

Solo improvisation

Facing You	ECM 1017
Solo Concerts	ECM 1035/37 (3 records)
The Köln Concert	ECM 1064/65 (2 records)
Hymns Spheres	ECM-2-1086 (2 records)

Piano and strings compositions

In the Light	ECM 1033/34 (2 records)
Luminescence	ECM 1049
Arbour Zena	ECM-1-1070

Jazz

The Mourning of a Star	Atlantic SD 1596
Birth	Atlantic SD 1612
El Juicio (The Judgment)	Atlantic SD 1673
Expectations	Columbia KG 31580 (2 records)
Ruta and Daitya	ECM 1021
Fort Yawuh	Impulse AS-9240
Treasure Island	Impulse AS-9274
Death and the Flower	Impulse AS-9301
Belonging	ECM 1050
Back Hand	Impulse AS-9305

With Charles Lloyd

Dream Weaver	Atlantic SD 1459
Forest Flower	Atlantic SD 1473
Best of Charles Lloyd	Atlantic SD 1556

With Miles Davis

At Fillmore	Columbia CG 30038 (2 records)
Live—Evil	Columbia CG 30954 (2 records)

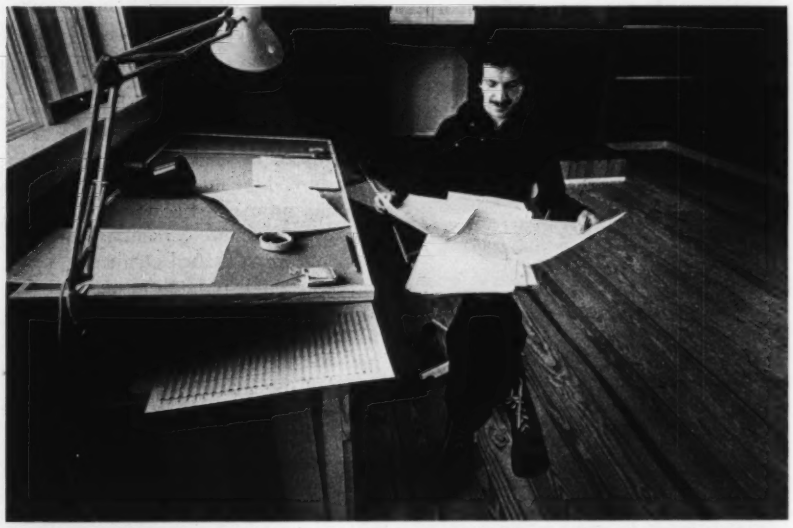
ed to get things straight.

"No," I said. "I'm just talking now."

"Okay." He nodded and ate a piece of lamb.

After dinner, everyone helped clear the table.

"I want you to hear something," Jarrett said, leading me through the living room into the study. "I did some concerts in Japan a couple of months ago, and I just got the tapes." A large desk, a couch facing a pair of speakers and a wall of books and records. The library was that of a man who reads for information rather than for fun. I noticed some Ouspensky, some Gurdjieff and a book on Islam—presumably, Jarrett also reads for enlightenment. He poured a brandy for me, and then a small one for himself, and put on the tape.



A clean, well-lit place: Jarrett pointed to a barn. "I'll be up there for a while now. There's nothing in it but a lamp, a table and a stack of music paper"

"These were odd concerts in one way," he said. "I usually know while I'm playing how good it is, or if it's horrible, but I didn't in Japan. There was a lot of strange stuff going on in my head. I'd get off stage without really knowing. And depressed sometimes, which is *very* unusual for me after a concert. But Manfred knew it was good, and so did Margot, and those are the two people I trust most about music. It turned out they were right. It's going to be an eight-record album. Eight records!"

The tape began, piano notes dropping like pearls. Instantly Jarrett was transformed, his entire attention focused on the music. I thought that I could sense an attempt on his part to remain still, but it was clearly impossible for him. When he listens, he is swept away, and it is a sort of muted version of what happens to him when he plays. After every phrase he gives a sharp, reflexive exhalation of breath, as if he has lived through that phrase in the act of listening to it—a kind of tight laugh, vaguely reminiscent of the short, sniffing sound a boxer makes as he throws a punch. The music, the phrases, are a kind of breathing to him. When the lines get long he rocks back and forth, and dips his head, and then raises it as the line soars. The gestures are pressurized, and mysteriously eloquent. It is as if he is straining to physically become the music, to turn his body into sound.

On first hearing, the Japanese concerts were very good indeed. The level of improvisation seemed higher than the German concerts—more complicated structures, and less reliance on repetitive figures in the left hand (although they still remain to some extent). Certain sequences were so daring, and so beautifully developed, that I had to remind myself that it *was* improvisation.

"What does it feel like when you're doing it?" I asked. "Does it feel as free as it sounds?"

"Yes," he said, without hesitation.

At one point, as he changed tapes, I said that I'd always been impressed by his touch and his ability to make the piano sing.

"An interviewer once asked me what pianists I particularly admired, and I said Rubenstein. It turned out Rubenstein was being interviewed for some Swiss newspaper at the same time, and they asked him who were the promising young pianists, and he mentioned me. I've never met him, of course. I had no idea he'd ever even heard me."

We listened until past midnight. Part of the time, Margot joined us, and when she was there Jarrett never took his eyes off her, watching her reaction to the music, some of which she hadn't heard since it was played in concert in Japan.

I spent the night in the guest room. Margot's loom was set up in one corner, surrounded by piles of brightly colored wool. I thought about the last thing Jarrett had told me, when I'd asked about his immediate plans. He would be writing, he'd said. Deutscher Gramophon had commissioned him to write a piece for the Boston Symphony, to be conducted by Ozawa, with himself playing piano. "My God," I'd said. "That's wonderful. I'll be there. I'll fly over from Nantucket." For the first time, I'd heard a note of doubt in Jarrett's voice—very faint, to be sure, because it was said lightly: "If I finish it."

At breakfast, I asked him if, in view of the direction his career was taking, he was finished playing jazz.

"I don't like to rule anything out," he said, "but I'm not forming a new group, if that's what you mean."

We spent the morning listening to some jazz, and a new album of Keith improvising on a baroque organ in a monastary in Germany. (He discovered a way to get quarter tones by pulling the stops part way.) Jarrett was eager to have me try his Steinway B grand, a recent aquisition, which I did, feeling more than a little self-conscious. "Don't worry," he said, "I won't say anything." He stood behind me while I played. When I was finished he said, "It's nice in here, don't you think," striking some keys about two octaves above middle C. "It's very strong along in here."

I made my goodbyes to Margot and Gabe, and Keith offered to drive me back to my car. As we walked across the driveway, he pointed up the hill to a small barn. "I'll be up there for a while now. There's nothing in it except a fireplace, a lamp, a drafting table and a stack of music paper." We got in the car. "So far I've got 26 pages of percussion," he said, shifting gears. "Some very soft parts. It's hard to play softly, you know." I suddenly had a fantasy of being Keith Jarrett and walking into Symphony Hall and hearing them play my music. I said it seemed to me that that must be an almost unimaginably gratifying experience.

"Yes. That's the reward," he said. "After all the pain of doing it, you just give it away. You just turn it over, and it isn't yours anymore." He smiled. "But then you get to hear it." ●

Movies

Macho do about something

By Richard Corliss

"Please write me at length about your adventures—I hear you were seen running through Portugal in used B.V.D.s, chewing ground glass and collecting material for a story about boule players; that you were publicity man for Lindbergh; that you have finished a novel a hundred thousand words long consisting entirely of the word 'balls' used in new groupings; that you have been naturalized a Spaniard, dress always in a wine-skin with 'zipper' vent and are engaged in bootlegging Spanish Fly between St. Sebastian and Biarritz where your agents sprinkle it on the floor of the Casino. I hope I have been misinformed but, alas!, it all has too true a ring. . . ."

—letter from F. Scott Fitzgerald to Ernest Hemingway, 1927

They could have been a vaudeville team, these two giants of American literature: Fitzgerald playing society reporter to Hemingway's tough-guy sportswriter, dissolute playboy to his man's man, bad boy to his Papa, Yin to his Yang, Laverne to his Surly. And they were two very self-conscious performers: Fitzgerald passing out under a Stork Club table while Zelda danced on top, Hemingway—the original Mr. Macho—arm wrestling with a generation of acolytes who always let him win. The two actors kept in character right up to their final exits: the Jazz Age chronicler drank himself to death; the big-game hunter took a shotgun and blew his brains out.

In the late thirties, the now-legendary Hemingway visited the now-tragic Fitzgerald at his Hollywood beach house. As biographer Aaron Latham tells it, "Hemingway would set up a card table out on the beach at night, station a kerosene lantern on it, and, with the waves rolling and the wind tugging at his pages, write *For Whom the Bell Tolls* in longhand." A friend told Fitzgerald, "He's just waiting for a columnist to come along and discover him writing that way." No, Hemingway was playing this role—the artist at one with nature—for a different audience: Fitzgerald, the fallen star of serious fiction who was now failing even on the Hollywood assembly line.

Hemingway never wrote directly for the movies. But his stories of illusionless adventurers, with their terse dialogue, proved easier to adapt to the screen than Fitzgerald's subtleties of character expressed through that clear, shimmering prose. Even Elia Kazan's noble attempt to film *The Last Tycoon* finally turned marbled and mute, a prize artifact in the Fitzgerald Museum. The author's prose got lost in translation. In the margin of that last novel, Fitzgerald wrote, "Action is character"; it was a principle that guided all of Hemingway's work. *His* poetry was in his plots—which is why a movie like **Islands in the Stream** can be utterly true to the spirit of Hemingway's novel and utterly transcend it.

Butch is back: If you're a boy, you win your manhood by struggling for three hours with a mighty marlin; if you're a man, you shoot a hammerhead shark

Islands in the Stream is, like *The Last Tycoon*, a fiction left unfinished at the author's death, and then refined and published by his literary executors. But whereas *Tycoon* shows Fitzgerald in control of his genius while guiding it in an exciting new direction, *Islands* finds Hemingway fishing in the same old waters for species that have become endangered through his own plundering. The energy in his writing—including the energy needed to wrestle the material down to its essentials—is gone; only the habit remains. The anchor for Hemingway's floating anecdotes is the mythic artist, adventurer and Man, Thomas Hudson, living in splendid self-absorption on the island of Bimini in 1940. You know he's supposed to be mythic because Hemingway always refers to him by his first *and* last names—and because he's clearly the author's heroic self-image. Hudson never comes alive in the novel; it's as if he's stiff-jointed from having posed too long for an official portrait. A novelist who can't distinguish between his own flawed personality and his movie-star persona shouldn't cast himself as the protagonist of a novel. Hemingway made that mistake; his executors made the mistake of publishing it.

But it's not a mistake that couldn't be turned to advantage by screenwriter Denne Bart Petitclerc, director Franklin J. Schaffner and a fine cast headed by George C. Scott. Petitclerc turned the novel's flaccid form to muscle, primarily by condensing its dozens of cameo caricatures into a fistful of finely etched characters who either accompany Hudson on his voyages through the Caribbean or remain hauntingly in his mind. Schaffner (*Planet of the Apes, Patton, Papillon*) blended the characters with their marine surroundings—they really do seem to breathe to the sea's rhythm. Scott gave the film its final, most palpable integrity, making Hudson's vulnerability part of his strength, and balancing the Hemingway hero's vaunted self-sufficiency with an aching awareness of his need for family ties. Together, they've produced the best American movie in years.

The first hour of *Islands in the Stream* is boys' adventure at its best—the boys being Hudson's three sons (ages 19, 14 and 10) and the young-spirited men who guide and share their sense of innocent excitement. Rites of passage predominate. If you're a boy, you win your manhood by struggling for three hours with a mighty marlin; if you're a man, you prove your maturity by the sureness with which you shoot a hammerhead shark threatening your boss's son. But Schaffner & Co. aren't dispensing varsity letters here. Nor are they loading the dice for or against any one character. This is a film without distinct villains, only some ordinarily remarkable people attempting to live up to the Hemingway code: grace under pressure.

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Joseph Epstein on the romance of sport: "On the court, down in the field, sport is fraud-free and fakeproof. A man either comes through or he doesn't. He is alone out there, naked but for his ability, which counts for everything. Something there is that is elemental about this, and something greatly satisfying."

Tom Wolfe on America's national one-upmanship: "With ever-increasing skill, the American intellectual would perform the difficult feat of the Adjectival Catch Up. The European intellectuals have a real wasteland? Well, we have a psychological wasteland. They have real fascism? Well, we have social fascism. They have real poverty? Well, we have relative poverty. They have real genocide? Well, we have cultural genocide."

In Harper's Tom Wolfe

Michael Novak in praise of the family: "Marriage, like every other serious use of one's freedom, is an enormous risk, and one's likelihood of failure is rather high. No tame project, marriage. The raising of children . . . brings each of us breathtaking vistas of our inadequacy."

Lewis Lapham (editor of Harper's) on JFK's love affairs: "That President Kennedy pursued women with a remorseless passion was a matter of common delight from the first days of his Administration. People spoke of his indiscretions with admiration and approval; their excited talk magnified his image as prince of the realm. It was as if Prince Hal had brought with him into the White House the bacchanalia of the Boar's Head Tavern."

In Harper's Lewis Lapham

Andrei Amalrik on the Soviet secret police: "For many years now I have been observing these people in the KGB and have come to the conclusion that their dominant characteristic is a kind of childishness, or more accurately, juvenility; they have the cruelty of teenage juveniles which comes from immaturity. . . ."

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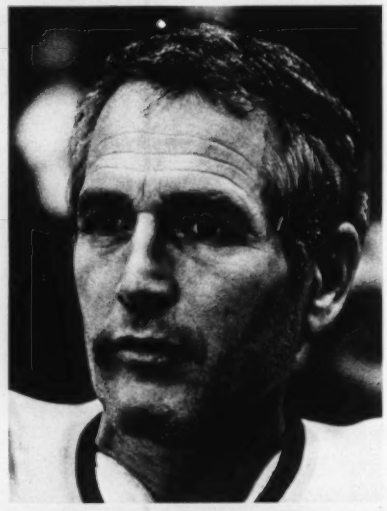
As 14-year-old Davy, Michael-James Wixted shows his character's and his own poise in the thrilling marlin marathon. Wixted has the face of a cherub who's just been scolded for singing hymns off-pitch; he always seems about to burst into reproachful tears. And with good reason: Davy hates his father. In a pillow fight with his brothers, Davy matches their playful aggression with a solemn hostility that breaks open when his father intervenes and the boy starts hitting at him wildly—all the more wildly because both of them know these blows can't hurt the man. So Davy's battle with the marlin is also a proxy battle of strength with his father: the boy at first wants to beat both of them, and later simply to prove to both that, if he can't hurt them, he can at least outlast them. It's a tremendous struggle that ends with the fish escaping. As Hudson carries the exhausted boy—now a young man, his hands and feet bleeding from combat stigmata—into the boat's cabin, Davy says, "In a strange way, during the hardest part, that's when I loved him more than anything." And that's when he came to terms with loving his father. "I'm sorry we lost him," Davy says, "I'm glad he got away."

Hudson's boys must get away, must leave their idyll to struggle through adolescence and escape to maturity. Soon after their departure from Bimini, Audrey (Claire Bloom), Hudson's first wife—the mother of Tommy, Hudson's eldest son—comes to the island. They had been young, poor and in love in the Paris of the twenties; they had been each other's image of passionate idealism. But Thomas' self-image changed with his success as an artist, and he needed a new woman to stand on the other side of his mirror. (Enter Wife No. 2, the mother of his younger sons.) Now, after so many years apart, Hudson and Audrey circle each other warily, like two souls in purgatory on a first date. They clearly remember how good their love was, and how good they were at subverting it. The first time Hudson touches Audrey, it's to hold her up—a gesture of both domination and reconciliation. They walk on the beach and he kisses her: "Yes," she says afterward, "you may kiss me if you like"—a signal of both her vulnerability and her contempt. Something's about to happen: they'll strike each other; they'll make love. They do neither: they have sex.

But sex doesn't release the tension coiled inside them—until Hudson suddenly understands why Audrey has come, why her conversation keeps returning to those wonderful days in a cheap Paris flat with their only son. Scott rubs his long, oddly elegant fingers on his neck, and the message is telegraphed to him: "He's dead, isn't he." Their son has been killed in the war. As the man and woman embrace, Audrey whispers, "Tom, Tommy"—her husband's name and her son's, connecting the two men and at the same time identifying Hudson as her own young man in need of a mother's comfort. "You love Davy the most," young Tom had told his father after the marlin expedition, "and that's right because he's the best of us." And Hudson had replied, "I've loved you the longest." Young Tom's death has frozen that love, petrified it like one of Hudson's sculptures. It's cut him off from the past and welded him irrevocably to it.



Punk malaise: *Slap Shot* is The Bad News Bears On Ice, a big, foul-mouthed TV movie, a *Daily News* sports column written by Larry Flynt

Though all the trappings of heroic adventure are splendidly laid out, *Islands in the Stream* is essentially a film about the heroic bonds of love: the blood love that binds members of a family; the love of shared responsibility and respect that binds men who work well together. Hudson's sons are not sitcom children, impish and calculating; the men in his crew aren't "buddies," nor is there even a tinge of homophilic attraction. So they can say "I love you" to each other without undertones of smirking or sexuality. This noble camaraderie, among men who need to be (and are) good at what they do, is a hallmark of director Howard Hawks' melodramas: *Only Angels Have Wings, Red River, Rio Bravo* and, to our present point, *To Have and Have Not* (with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall), which Hawks based on an earlier Hemingway novel. As Roger Greenspun points out in *Penthouse*, the movie *Islands* has jettisoned some of the novel's characters and situations, and replaced them with material from the Hawks film. (In both pictures, for example, the hero's sidekick is called Eddy the Rummy; in both pictures Eddy steals aboard the hero's boat to perform a final valiant deed. In *To Have and Have Not* the character was played by Walter Brennan; in *Islands* he's David Hemmings, 40 pounds overweight and giving a full-bodied, marvelously affecting performance.) These borrowings not only place Schaffner's film more securely in the adventure-movie tradition, they make better narrative sense than Hemingway's did. They turn the story from a series of rambling episodes into an easy, cohesive whole that moves as surely and inevitably as the sea.

"I love the sea," Hudson had written to his sons, "and wouldn't be anywhere else. . . . The sea teaches us that we are all one." The sea will be both his executioner and his final bride. At the end of his last adventure—running refugees to the coast of Cuba—Hudson slips from consciousness, and the sea provides the backdrop for memories and dreams of his family, reunited at Hudson's death as he and Audrey were reunited at the death of their son. This perfect, impossible image fades as Hudson dies, and the last shot of the film is the same as the first: an irregularly shaped rock jutting out of the sea as the waves break against it. We realize that nothing changes except, possibly, our understanding. We now see how similar Hudson's sculptures are to his surroundings, and how, at last, everything *is* one: Hudson, his family, his companions, his work, the sea. This reconciliation suggests a vision of life more mature than Hemingway, auditioning for immortality out there on Scott Fitzgerald's beach, could have created. It's a fitting resolution to a film so rich, so deep in feeling, so beautifully realized, that Fitzgerald himself would have been proud to sign his name to it.

Islands in the Stream provides one definition of manliness. **Slap Shot**, the new comedy about a minor-league

ice hockey team, provides another: talking dirty. *Islands* is a mature film; *Slap Shot* is a street-smart punk expressing his cosmic malaise by mooning old ladies. *Islands* demands the viewer's collaboration (a heightened sensibility, and maybe sentimentality), while *Slap Shot* just asks you to sit back and enjoy the movie equivalent of a *Daily News* sports column as it might be written by Larry Flynt. A lot of people really like *Slap Shot*; jock humor has its own appealing poetry and vitality. But the film sets itself such easy challenges and aims at such barn-door targets that I can't bring myself to care much about its success. *Slap Shot* is this year's first big foul-mouthed TV movie—The Bad News Bears On Ice.

Author Nancy Dowd and director George Roy Hill want it both ways: to exploit the reckless thrills of hockey violence and still remain morally superior to it. So, toward the end of the film, Paul Newman (the player-coach who transforms his losing team into a contender by encouraging his players to become intimidating goons) delivers a lecture on the venality of unsportsmanlike conduct. This is a shuck, since *Slap Shot* owes its popularity to the rough-house. But it may allow Newman, the middle-aged statesman of Hollywood liberalism, to rationalize appearing in a role he's not comfortable with. I'm uncomfortable with the film. You'd never know from *Slap Shot* that ice hockey is an exciting, artful game. The movie has appropriated the excitement without suggesting the muscular artistry in a clean pass, a good fore-check, a short-handed goal.

Books

Two good fictions

By Geoffrey Wolff

Falconer *by John Cheever.* Knopf (211 pp., $7.95).
A Book of Common Prayer *by Joan Didion.* Simon and Schuster (272 pp., $8.95).

John Cheever's Ezekiel Farragut is 48, a college professor, son of a well-off family that fell on hard times, married, with a son, someone you meet, you know? But different: he is also a heroin addict on methadone maintenance at Falconer, a prison up river from New York. His sentence is "zip to ten." He has killed his brother Eben with a fire poker.

. "His story, Farragut knew, would be unsavory, but what Farragut didn't know was what importance to give unsavory matters. They existed, they were invincible, but the light they threw was, he thought, unequal to their prominence." Of late, Cheever's fictions have inclined increasingly toward the odd perspectives and dimensions of the dream state. He has always been preoccupied with bad luck and bad news. People call his stories and novels "sad," and they are. (In an interview in the fall, 1976, *Paris Review*, Cheever says, "All right, so I'm a sad man.") Cheever, like Magritte (whose work he used as the dustjacket illustration for his most recent collection of stories, *The World of Apples*), transports his characters into the surreal with clarity and acuity, a comprehensible grammar of purpose.

That is, Farragut's circumstances are out of the ordinary. His wife believes herself to be the most beautiful woman in the world, and she may be. She takes a lesbian lover, for a time. Ezekiel's parents, out of money, open a gas station. His brother had probably meant to murder him. In prison he takes a homosexual lover. In prison he is brutalized. One of the guards embarks upon a pogrom against the prison cats after a couple of cats eat "his steak and potatoes, shit in his plate" and begin on his dessert. The guard, Tiny, "tore the head off one of them. The other got away. When he was tearing off the cat's head he got very badly bitten." So Tiny and his comrades set out to slaughter a world of cats, and, slipping through blood and excrement and vomit, they kill many. But Tiny finally has enough: "O.K., O.K., that's enough for tonight, but it don't give me back my London broil."

Cheever: Exploring odd perspectives

There's Cheever's method, an event out of this world rendered with the precision of diction and cadence that has always been his signature. Nothing I can say can suggest how weird this book is, how disturbing. It is not merely that *Falconer* is, as Farragut concedes, an "unsavory" narrative, though it is that, indeed it is. It is that a reader expects to wake from it, or to watch Farragut awake from it: *Ezekiel woke up, and found his wife beside him, smiling. "Sleep well, dear?" she asked. "Well enough," Farragut lied.* Cheever is incapable of committing such pedestrian relief, but he creates a longing for it. The book is tense with a reader's longing for relief and Cheever's refusal to yield it.

The fiction is not, however, without its consolations, but they are measured as exactly as its language. Ezekiel's lover, Jody, escapes, and so does Farragut, like the Count of Monte Cristo. There is an insurrection at Falconer, perceived from far off. There are expressions of love, and patience, but there is also the suggestion that all people are under a kind of life sentence, and are like a prisoner known only as Chicken Number Two, "whose name was known nowhere, nowhere in the far reaches of the earth or in the far reaches of his memory, where, when he talked to himself, he talked to himself as Chicken Number Two."

Falconer is resolutely controlled, except when it once shifts its point of view to Jody, outside the prison walls. Its language is laconic, yet

eloquent. There are passages that resemble echoes of Raymond Chandler, or even Bruce Jay Friedman: "The day was shit," Ezekiel thinks. Falconer is a prison, sure enough, true to prison truths as well as to the kind of prison metaphors that gather around fictions about islands and aboard ships, worlds apart from this world, yet peopled by this world's people.

The 19th century French critic Hippolyte Taine wrote that a man in an open field would rather confront a sheep than a lion, but were the beast behind bars, the man would prefer to look upon a lion; art, he maintained, provides the bars. By this measure *Falconer,* raising bars, is art, and by creating the illusion of lowering them, is subversive and menacing art, the most bracing kind.

A Book of Common Prayer is told about Charlotte Douglas, who has been shot dead, by Grace Strasser-Mendana, nee Tabor, 60, dying of cancer of the pancreas. Charlotte has been twice married, the first time to Warren, an erratic academic, dying and dead during the fiction, and to Leonard, a lawyer for radicals and record executives. Charlotte has had two children: one has recently died in infancy and the other, Marin, bombed a building in San Francisco and hijacked a plane to Utah. Marin is on the lam from the FBI. Charlotte, on the lam from two husbands, has jettisoned herself to Boca Grande, the capitol of Boca Grande, a Central American republic principally owned and managed by Grace and her family.

Shoo—this is a plot? This is a plot. Joan Didion unfolds from these comic opera complications a full range of motive and consequence that bestows grace and full life upon at least four characters. If it sometimes wanders from place to place seemingly without cause, it can be seriously argued that it is about people who wander from place to place seemingly without cause, and that everything has its cause, and that it is the business of this particular fiction to discover causes. Causes may, for all that, be arbitrary, just as consequences may appear arbitrary. (Fiction is arbitrary at its peril, and the few times *A Book of Common Prayer* takes the dare of mere coincidence, it relaxes its power.)

The book begins with a mystery: why is Grace, a woman of nobility and intelligence, with a rich history to tell, spending her last days on the story of a woman of transcendent ordinariness? She says, "I am interested in Charlotte Douglas only insofar as she passed through Boca Grande, only insofar as the meaning of that sojourn continues to elude me." These are the words of an untrustworthy narrator, and one who only much later in the book surrenders her truer purpose: "Maybe there is no motive role in this narrative. Maybe it is just something that happened. Then why is it in my mind when nothing else is."

That final sentence, without a question's punctuation, stands as a kind of declaration of this book's purpose: there is no such thing as the quotidian; carefully enough anatomized,

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY LLOYD ESTRIN

Didion: Seeking out causes

any character or set of episodes will yield its plot, its form. I don't believe this proposition, I guess, but Grace, by Didion's grace, does—she was an anthropologist—and displays its merits.

Charlotte is heedless, what a lesser novelist might summarize as "giddy." She tells pointless anecdotes, wastes her time, lets everything slip away from her: "I think," Grace says, "I have never known anyone who led quite so unexamined a life." She was "a child of comfortable family in the temperate zone" of America and had been "as a matter of course provided with clean sheets, orthodontia, lamb chops, living grandparents, attentive godparents, one brother named Dickie, ballet lessons, and casual timely information about menstruation and the care of flat silver, as well as with a small wooden angel, carved in Austria, to sit on her bed table and listen to her prayers. In these prayers the child Charlotte routinely asked that 'it' turn out all right, 'it' being unspecified and all-inclusive, and she had been an adult for some years before the possibility occurred to her that 'it' might not."

There is a Didion passage for you, complete with her best signature (the lamb chops), exact, compressed, a whole biography, a portrait. Yet it is her purpose to discover in this product of dexterity and condensation what Lillian Hellman happily calls *pentimento*, a layer of design beneath the immediately visible design, an archeology of afterthought and repair, emendation. I believe that Didion means to show that prayer—hope, if you prefer—is never "common," even when it is such a prayer as Charlotte has uttered.

Grace observes of Charlotte's first husband that "his face had been coarsened by contempt" and his mind by self-pity, and that "as it happened he was quite often 'right' to hold other people in contempt, and he was also 'right' to regard himself with pity, but allow a dying woman a maxim or two. I have noticed that it is never enough to be right. I have noticed that it is necessary to be better."

And so Charlotte is. Better than she seems, and better than she was. She dies stupidly, according to the world's measure of such things. She remains in Boca Grande during one of its pointless and serial revolutions, and is shot in the back. People try to persuade her to leave. Her husband Leonard, a good man with odds (and a better man also than he at first is made by Grace and her author to seem), tells Charlotte, as the revolution begins, to come away, that she will not get "real points" for staying. "'I can't seem to tell what you do get the real points for,' Charlotte said. 'So I guess I'll stick around here awhile.'"

There is a nobility here, across the board. It is a sense of having hung around for the worst, and having taken the best when it unhid itself, that this fiction shares with Cheever's. A sense that the prominence of the unsavory (and the diminished and compressed and symbolic) exceeds its light, that to know anything whole, and tell it whole, is to survive it. Grace is dying—so are we all—but she, grace, does not in this fiction die.

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Food

A sap from Vermont/By Andrew Kopkind

Vermont—they tell the flatlanders—is a state of mind as well as a state of the Union. It is a place defined by independence and idiosyncrasy. Hard work, hard drink, hard times: Vermont has a low standard of living, a high rate of alcoholism and a fine sense of history. Old ways die hard, too. Vermonters still farm stones from the rocky pastures, troop to town meeting in the snow and preserve the green and pleasant land—at least as far as they are able. And in March, they still defy big business and brave the weather to make nectar from the trees.

"Sugaring" is a season by itself. The tedious process of extracting sap from rock maples and boiling it down to a delicious syrup lasts through melt and mud and into May in some years. "It's the time between," says Henry Swayze of Tunbridge, who produced only a thousand gallons of syrup last year, but at that is one of Vermont's few big producers. "There are no other farm jobs to do, the winter repairs are made and spring planting is weeks away," he shrugs. "So the farmers do the sugaring to pay the taxes and buy the staples. It's always been that way."

In my part of Vermont—where I've sloshed through seven springs—sugaring starts the day after town meeting, in the first week of March, weather permitting. "Things get so hot at meetin' that the sap starts flowin' in the trees," a neighbor explains.

That's what they tell the flatlanders. Plant scientists have a more clinical explanation. The slowly warming, lengthening days around the equinox stimulate enzymes to convert the tree's stored starch into usable sugar, which is circulated from root to branch and back again as sap.

"You need a continual warming trend during the days—if the temperature retreats even a degree, the whole thing stops and it takes a long time to resume," Swayze warns. The nights must be cold, the days sunny and calm. But the wicked weather does not always shine on the sugarbush as directed. A bad season can halve the previous good year's production. In the last 15 years, Vermont producers have made as much as 554,000 gallons of syrup, and as little as 240,000, in one year.

There was a time when Vermont maple syrup was poured on pancakes throughout the country. Now only those who venture into the state can readily get to know its special flavor. The national food industry has decided that the supply of real syrup is too unpredictable, its cost too high and its production methods too antiquated to bother with. Most "breakfast syrups" never saw the inside of a maple tree—or any tree. Aunt Jemima still uses 2 percent pure maple in an ersatz wash. For the rest, "imitation" flavor is pushed as the new standard to a deprived world that may never realize its loss.

In Vermont, pure maple syrup is still a bargain. Swayze sold his three top table graders (Fancy, Grade A and Grade B) last year for $15.40 a gallon—slightly below the average price in the state. In Brattleboro, as the season wanes, you can buy a gallon of Grade B for $11 or less. There are few better deals in raw resources left these days. B may sound second-rate, but for Vermonters it's the best. With B, you know you are drinking from a tree. Fancy and A are for the delicate palates of flatlanders.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE T. MANNA/GLOBE PHOTOS

How sweet it is: Elmer Jenne uses 1,400 pails to collect sap from his maple grove, known as a sugarbush

"We like to compare the grades to wine," Swayze said earnestly. "Fancy is like a sparkling, mild white. Grade A is like a light red. B is like a rich, heavy Burgundy. And C really has a kick to it."

State inspectors check the grades at retail outlets, but they also visit producers to offer advice and encourage the trade. Grading is based on color—from light amber to dark brown—and the delicacy of flavor is correlated with the hue, although the inspectors leave that subjective judgment to the customer. All grades are equally thick (66 percent solid content) and—the farmers want you to know—all take the same amount of hard work to produce.

Until a few years ago, the standard method of sugaring was tap-and-bucket. One or more short, metal, hollow plugs are driven into a maple several feet from the base. Buckets hung on the taps collect the slowly dripping sap. When full, the buckets (which are protected from the rain or snow by lids resembling little creased hats) are brought to a collecting tank; then the sap is taken to the sugar shack, where it is boiled in a series of evaporation pans. One tap yields about 10 gallons of sap; 40 gallons of sap, on the average, make one gallon of syrup. In peak production time, the pans are boiling night and day. And it takes a cord of dry hardwood (the traditional fuel) to produce 20 gallons of syrup.

At 40-to-1, maple sap is as thin and tasteless as water. At higher concentrations of sugar, it sweetens. At 10-to-1 (which is not unknown when the weather is perfect and the season is at its peak), maple sap makes such seductive coffee and tea water that no other sweetener is necessary. But the best taste of all is syrup straight from the last evaporation pan. Kids scoop up cupfuls and pour it over snowballs, to eat like Italian ices at a street stand.

In the last decade, science and industry have started to change the traditions of sugaring to facilitate or increase production. Farmers whose sugarbushes stand on steep slopes can use plastic pipelines instead of buckets to carry the sap straight from the tap to the collecting tank. At Salt Ash Mountain there is a project underway to construct a sugaring operation five or ten times larger than any that now exist. And botanists are working on improved strains of maple that will withstand the hazards of road-salt pollution, insect infestation and traffic trauma. Still, it takes 40 years for a maple to grow from seed to sap. The average Vermont farm makes only a hundred gallons of syrup a year. That's enough for family, taxes and the flatlanders who stop at the country store.

Someday, agribusiness may find it profitable to reintroduce America to real maple syrup. But for now, it remains one of America's last, loving cottage industries, producing a rare and estimable delight. ●

Final Tribute

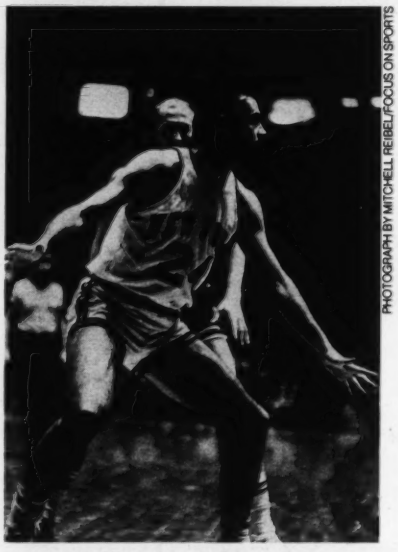
Dollar Bill's parting shot/By Mark Goodman

Bill Bradley looks less like a professional athlete than practically anyone else who ever played big-time American basketball. For ten years fans of the New York Knickerbockers have watched this curious, slightly awkward, wholly unprepossessing figure charging up and down, up and down the court at Madison Square Garden like a bemused bird dog sniffing his quarry. In this case, the quarry was the rival forward he was guarding, or the open shot. Bradley was good at his job. He could guard a man to distraction (his friend Jack Marin once screamed at a referee: "Tell that Commie to keep his hands off me"). And he had the knack of working himself open for a shot when it looked like the Lakers or the Celtics were fielding a team of eight. He played a vital role in the Knicks' two world championships, and he even made the National Basketball Association all-star team once. The fans cheered him lavishly all the while—even if they didn't know quite what to make of him. But he never looked right out there. He would lurch while everyone else flowed: Bigfoot among a pride of panthers. Besides, he didn't look happy.

Odd, because Bill Bradley is absolutely bonkers about basketball, a game at which he has labored with apostolic zeal since his boyhood days in Crystal City, Missouri. Bradley chose to love the game; it did not, as it did with so many of his ghetto-bred colleagues, choose him. As John McPhee wrote in his splendid book on Bradley, *A Sense of Where You Are*: "He has overcome the disadvantage of wealth. A great basketball player, almost by definition, is someone who has grown up in a constricted world, not for lack of vision or ambition but for lack of money; his environment has been limited to home, gym and playground, and it has forced upon him, as a developing basketball player, the discipline of having nothing else to do. Bradley must surely be the only basketball player who wintered regularly in Palm Beach until he was 13 years old."

Twenty-one years later, the town banker's only son can return to Palm Beach if he wants, because he is finally calling it quits at the end of this season. Bradley will miss the game like he would miss his sure right hand, and he will miss his teammates, but he will not miss what he termed the "small public celebrity" that has accompanied him since his sophomore year at Princeton. It is precisely that deep-grained reluctance to be Bill Bradley the Public Figure that makes him look so uncomfortable in public, on and off the court. He is the only athlete I've ever met who would just as soon play in an empty gym.

To say that Bill Bradley is not flashy is to suggest that Elizabeth Taylor is not as innocent as she might be. Take his clothes. As teammate Walt Frazier wrote about Bradley in his book *Rockin' Steady*: "Here are two rookies, him and me. One emptying out the clothing stores as fast as he can get to them, and the other guy, he could afford it but he's dressed like Harpo Marx." He also drives a Volkswagen in a sea of Rolls-Royces. Bradley



PHOTOGRAPH BY MITCHELL REIBEL/FOCUS ON SPORTS

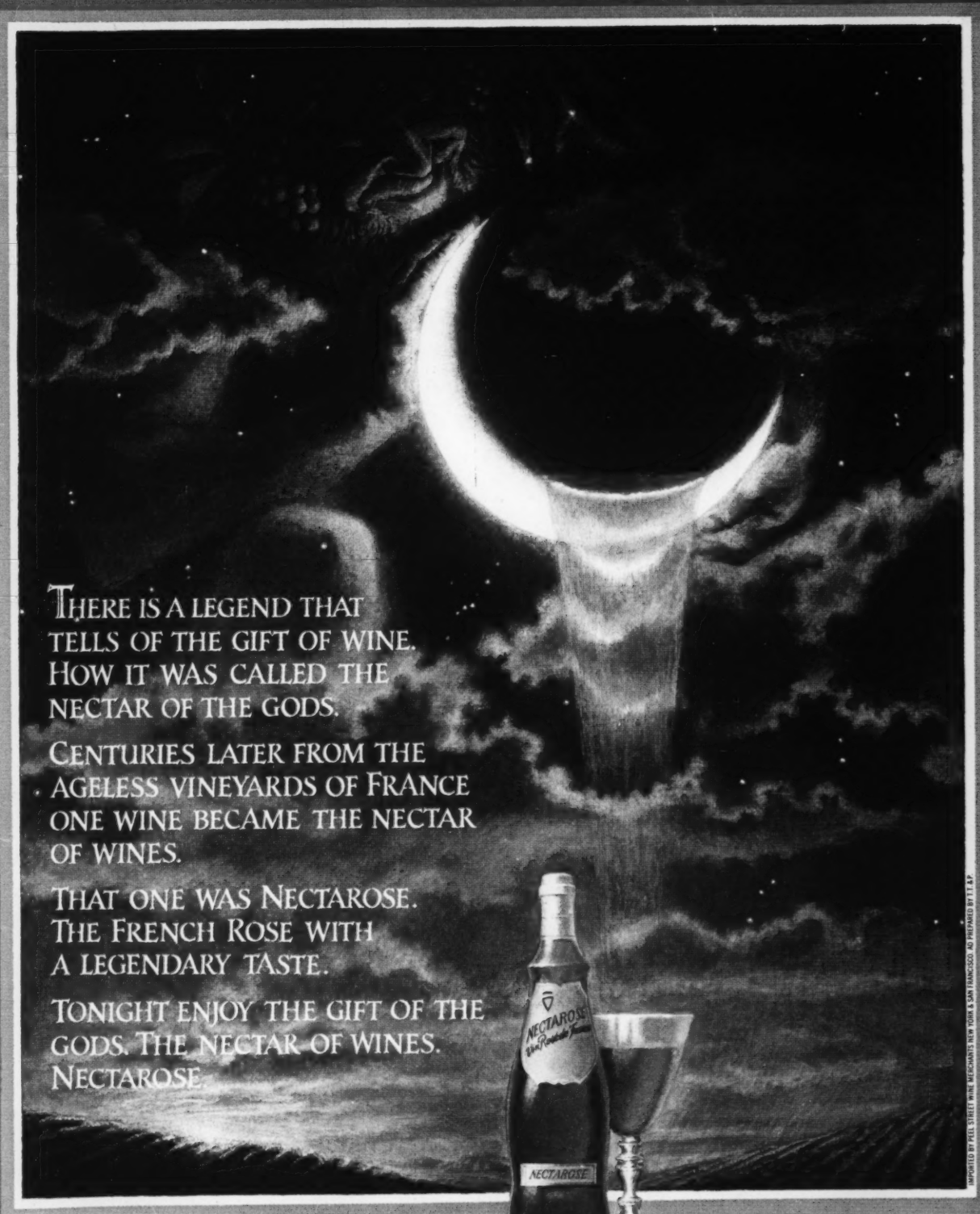
selected a difficult craft in which to hide. We see basketball players at close range, hatless, half-naked and a good foot taller than the rest of the world. There's no escape—not in dim restaurants, not in movie theaters; no one can miss them. Other athletes can feign commonplace; basketball players cannot.

Still, Bradley has managed to guard his privacy as if it were a family heirloom—and not without a trace of aristocratic arrogance. He is the bane of daily sportswriters, and I don't blame him a whit. Until you've put in some time in a professional locker room you can't begin to grasp the toll those deadly questions take day after day after day. "How'd you feel when you missed that shot?" reporters ask. The player must reply, "You always like to put two points on the board. . . ."

Bradley, Princetonian and Rhodes Scholar, simply understands that in the cosmic scheme of things basketball isn't ultimately important; he has termed it "prolonged adolescence." Nor does he consider his personal life anyone else's business. In his book *Life on the Run* (not ghosted), Bradley admits to playing dumb for sportswriters so they would go away; he quietly delights in being a bum interview. He doesn't even want to have his work with Harlem youth and prison reform groups covered. (He produced a play about prison life, *The Poison Tree*, which ran on Broadway.)

Nor do we view Bill Bradley in pantyhose or Bill Bradley blowing past cheering old crones en mad route to the Hertz counter or—God knows—Bill Bradley modeling a new line of Bill Bradley clothes. He is a good Christian, a rock-ribbed Presbyterian who used to play a recording of *Climb Every Mountain* to fire himself up for a game, and he understands and confesses to temptation, but he has never yet endorsed a product. This is truly remarkable in an era in which athletes dream golden dreams of being traded to teams in New York or Los Angeles to jack up their endorsement take. Bradley has nothing against money—he earns around $325,000 a year now, and the first four-year contract he signed broke the ground for today's long-run contracts and earned him the sobriquet "Dollar Bill." It's just that Bradley's abilities were for sale; he was not.

For 12 years now, people have been predicting that Bradley might someday be president, and he may well run for Congress from New Jersey next election. I wonder. Campaigning for George McGovern is one thing; climbing into the political muck is quite another, and Bradley strikes me as nothing if not fastidious. Still, just because he spent ten years trying not to act like a jock, don't think leaving basketball is any less painful for him. Maybe he didn't look happy on the court, but will he be happy off it? Read his book. He writes: "Behind all the years of practice and all the hours of glory waits that inexorable terror of living without the game. No more nights of happy exhaustion. No more tomorrows with another chance. It's over."●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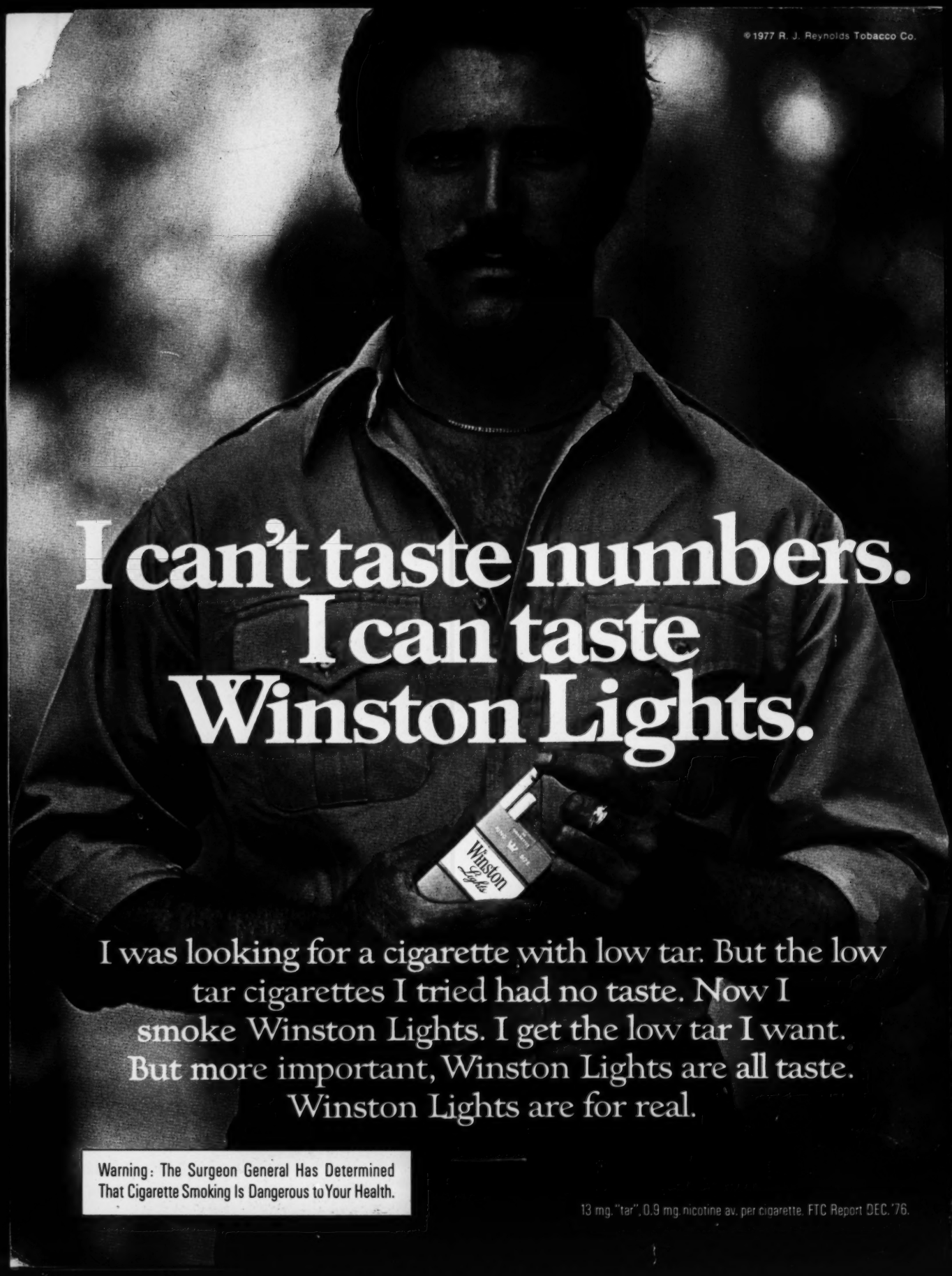
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